

XXVIII

SERMONS

PREACHED AT

GOLDEN GROVE;

Being for the Summer half-year,
BEGINNING ON WHITSUNDAY,
And ending on the xxv. Sunday after
TRINITY.

TOGETHER WITH

A Discourse of the Divine Institution, Necessity, Sacredness,
and Separation of the Office Ministeriall,

BY JER. TAYLOR, D.D.



LONDON,

Printed by R. N. for Richard Royston at the Angel
in Ivie-Lane. 1654.

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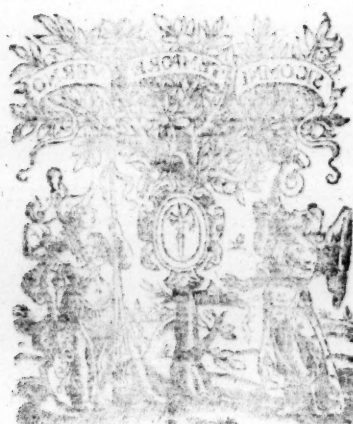
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TRINITY

TOGETHER WITH

A DISCOURSE OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION, Necessarily
and separation of the Office of the Ministry

BY J. M. TAYLOR, D.D.



LONDON

Printed by R. M. for Richard Rogers at the Angel
in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1824.



To the right Honourable and truly Noble,
RICHARD Lord VAUGHAN,
Earl of *Carbery*, Baron of *Emlin*, and *Molingar*,
Knight of the Honourable Order
of the *Bath*.

My Lord,



Now present to your Lordship a Copy of those Sermons the publication of which was first designed by the appetites of that hunger and thirst of righteousness, which made your Dear Lady (that rare soul) so dear to God, that he was pleased speedily to satisfy her, by carrying her from our shallow and impure cisterns to drink out of the fountains of our Saviour. My Lord, I shall but prick your tender eye, if I shall remind your Lordship, how diligent a hearer, how carefull

The Epistle Dedicatory.

a recorder, how prudent an observer, how sedulous a practiser of holy discourses she was, and that therefore it was, that what did slide thorow her ear, she was desirous to place before her eye, that by those windows they might enter in and dwell in her heart: But because by this truth I shall do advantage to the following discourses, give me leave (my Lord) to fancy, that this Book is derived upon your Lordship almost in the nature of a legacy from her, whose every thing was dearer to your Lordship, then your own eyes, and that what she was pleased to beleieve apt to minister to her devotions, and the religions of her pious and discerning soul, may also be allowed a place in your closet, and a portion of your retirement, and a lodging in your thoughts, that they may encourage and instruct your practise, and promote that interest, which is and ought to be dearer to you then all those blessings and separations with which God hath remarked your family and person.

My Lord, I confesse the publication of these Sermons can so little serve the ends of my reputation, that I am therefore pleased the rather to do it; because I cannot at all be tempted, in so doing, to minister to any thing of vanity. Sermons may please when they first strike the ear, and yet appear flat and ignorant when they are offered to the eye, and to an understanding that can consider at leisure. I remember that a young Gentleman of Athens being to answer for his life, hired an Orator to make his defence, and it pleased him well, at his first reading; but

The Epistle Dedicatory.

but when the young man by often reading it that he might recite it publiquely by heart, began to grow weary & displeased with it, the Orator bade him consider that the Judges and the people were to hear it but once, and then it was likely, they at that first instant might be as well pleased as he. This hath often represented to my minde the condition and fortune of Sermons, and that I now part with the advantage they had in their delivery; but I have sufficiently answered my self in that, and am at rest perfectly in my thoughts as to that particular, if I can in any degree serve the interest of souls, and (which is next to that) obey the piety, and record the memory of that dear Saint, whose name and whose soul is blessed: for in both these ministeries, I doubt not but your Lordship will be pleased, and account as if I had done also some service to your self: your Religion makes me sure of the first, and your Piety puts the later past my fears. However, I suppose in the whol account of this affair, this publication may be esteemed but like preaching to a numerous Auditory, which if I had done, it would have been called either duty, or charity, and therefore will not now so readily be censured for vanity, if I make use of all the wayes I can to minister to the good of souls: But because my intentions are fair in themselves, and I hope are acceptable to God, and will be fairly expounded by your Lordship, (whom for so great reason I so much value) I shall not trouble you or the world with an Apologie for this so free publishing my weakneses; I can better secure my reputation

The Epistle Dedicatory.

putation by telling men how they ought to entertain Sermons, for if they that read or hear, do their duty aright, the Preacher shall soon be secured of his fame, and untoucht by censure.

1. For it were well, if men would not inquire after the learning of the sermon, or its deliciousnesse to the eare or fancy, but observe its usefulnessse, not what concerns the preacher, but what concerns themselves, not what may make a vain reflection upon him, but what may substantially serve their own needs, that the attending to his discourses may not be spent in vain talk concerning him, or his disparagements, but may be used as a duty and a part of religion, to minister to edification and instruction. When S. John reckoned the principles of evil actions, he told but of three, The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. But there was then also in the world (and now it is grown into age, and strength, and faction) another lust, the lust of the ear, and a fifth also, the lust of the tongue. Some people have an insatiable appetite in hearing, and hear only that they may hear, and talk, and make a party: They enter into their neighbours house to kindle their candle, and espying there a glaring fire, sit down upon the hearth and warme themselves all day, and forget their errand, and in the mean time, their own fires are not lighted, nor their families instructed, or provided for, nor any need served, but a lazie pleasure, which is uselesse and impudent. Hearing or reading sermons is, or ought to be in order

The Epistle Dedicatory.

dar to practise, for so God intended it, that faith should come by hearing, and that charity should come by faith, and by both together we may be saved. For a mans ears (as Plutarch calls them) are virtutum anse, by them we are to hold and apprehend vertue, and unlesse we use them as men do vessels of dishonour, filling them with things fit to be thrown away, with any thing that is not necessary, we are by them more neerly brought to God, then by all the senses beside. For although things placed before the eye affect the minde more readily then the things we usually hear, yet the reason of that is, because we hear carelessly, and we hear variety; the same species dwells upon the eye, and represents the same object in union and single representment, but the objects of the ear are broken into fragments of periods, and words, and syllables, and must be attended with a carefull understanding; and because every thing diverts the sound, and every thing calls off the understanding, and the spirit of a man is truly and trifling, therefore it is, that what men hear, does so little affect them, and so weakly work toward the purposes of vertue, & yet nothing does so affect the minde of man, as those voices to which we cannot chuse but attend, & thunder and all loud voices from Heaven rend the most stony heart, and makes the most obstinate pay to God the homage of trembling, and fear, and the still voice of God usually takes the tribute of love, and choice, and obedience. Now since hearing is so effective an instrument of conveying impresses and ma-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ges of things, and exciting purposes, and fixing resolutions, (unless we hear weakly and imperfectly) it will be of the greater concernment that we be curious to hear in order to such purposes, which are perfective of the soul, and of the spirit, and not to dwell in fancy and speculation, in pleasures and trifling arrests, which continue the soul in its fancy and childhood, never letting it go forth into the wisdom and vertues of a man. I have read concerning Dionysius of Sicily, that being delighted extreamly with a Minstrel that sung well, and struck his Harp dexterously, he promised to give him a great reward, and that raised the fancy of the Man, & made him play better. But when the musick was done, and the man waited for his great hope, the King dismissed him empty, telling him, that he should carry away as much of the promised reward, as himself did of the Musick, and that he had payed him sufficiently with the pleasure of the promise for the pleasure of his song: both their ears had been equally delighted, and the profit just none at all: So it is in many mens hearing Sermons, they admire the Preacher, and he pleases their ears, and neither of them both bear along with them any good, and the hearer hath as little good by the sermon, as the Preacher by the ayr of the peoples breath, when they make a noise, and admire, and understand not. And that also is a second caution I desire all men would take.

2. That they may never trouble the affairs of preaching and hearing respectively, with admiring the person

·v· The Epistle Dedicatory.

person of any man. To admire a preacher is such a reward of his pains or worth, as if you should crown a Conqueror with a garland of roses, or a Bride with Laurell; it is an undecency, it is no part of the reward which could be intended for him. For though it be a good natur'd folly, yet it hath in it much danger, for by that means, the Preacher may lead his hearers captive, and make them servants of a faction, or of a lust; it makes them so much the lesse to be servants of Christ, by how much they call any man Master upon earth; it weakens the heart and hands of others, it places themselves in a rank much below their proper station, changing from hearing the word of God, to admiration of the person and faces of men, and it being a fault that falls upon the more easie natures and softer understandings, does more easily abuse a man; and though such a person may have the good fortune to admire a good man and a wise, yet it is an ill disposition, and makes him liable to every mans abuse: Stupidum hominem quâvis oratione percelli, said Heraclitus. An undiscerning person is apt to be cozened by every oration: And besides this, That Preacher whom some do admire, others will most certainly envy, and that also is to be provided against with diligence, and you must not admire too forwardly, for your own sake, lest you fall into the hands of a worse preacher, and for his sake, whom when you admire you also love, for others wil be apt to envy him.

3. But that must by all men be avoided; for envy

The Epistle Dedicatory.

is the worst counsellour in the world, and the worst hearer of a wise discourse. I pity those men who live upon flattery and wonder, and while they sit at the foot of the Doctors chair, stare in his face, and cry *καλὸν καὶ μέγα φιλοσοφία*, rarely spoken, admirably done, they are like callow and unfeathered birds, gaping perpetually to be fed from anothers mouth, and they never come to the knowledge of the truth, such a knowledge as is effective, and expressed in a prudent and holy life. But those men that envy the preacher, besides that they are great enemies of the Holy Ghost, and are spitefully evil, because God is good to him, they are also enemies to themselves. He that envies the honours, or the riches of another, envies for his own sake, and he would fain be rich with that wealth which sweats in his neighbours coffers; but he that envies him that makes good sermons, envies himself, and is angry because himself may receive the benefit, and be improved, or delighted, or instructed by another. He that is apt fondly to admire any mans person, must cure himself by considering, that the Preacher is Gods minister & servant, that he speaks Gods word and does it by the Divine assistance, that he hath nothing of his own but sin and imperfection, that he does but his duty, and that also hardly enough, that he is highly answerable for his talent, and stands deeply charged with the cure of souls, and therefore that he is to be highly esteemed for the work sake, not for the person; his industry and his charity is to be beloved, his ability is to be accounted

The Epistle Dedicatory.

counted upon another stock, and for it, the preacher and the hearer are both to give God thanks, but nothing is due to the man for that, save only, that it is the rather to be imployed because, by it we may better be instructed, but if any other reflection be made upon his person, it is next to the sin and danger of Herod and the people, when the fine Oration was made *in modis paulatim*, with huge fancy the people were pleased, and Herod was admired, and God was angry, and an Angel was sent to strike him with death and with dishonour. But the envy against a preacher is to be cured by a contrary discourse, and we must remember that he is in the place of God, and hath received the gift of God, & the aids of the holy Ghost, that by his abilities God is glorified, and we are instructed, and the interests of vertue and holy religion are promoted, that by this means God who deserves that all souls should serve him for ever, is likely to have a fairer harvest of glory and service, and therefore that envy is against him: that if we envie because we are not the instrument of this good to others, we must consider that we desire the praise to our selves not to God. Admiration of a man supposes him to be inferiour to the person so admired, but then he is pleased so to be, but envie supposes him as low, and he is displeased at it, and the envious man is not only lesse then the other mans vertue, but also contrary: the former is a vanity, but this is a vice, that wants wisdom, but this wants wisdom and charity too, that supposes an absence of some good,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

but this is a direct affliction and calamity.

4. And after all this, if the preacher be not despised, he may proceed cheerfully in doing his duty, and the hearer may have some advantages by every Sermon. I remember that Homer sayes the woers of Penelope laught at Ulysses, because at his return he called for a loaf, and did not to shew his gallantry, call for swords & spears; Ulysses was so wise as to call for that he needed, and had it, and it did him more good then a whole armory would in his case: so is the plainest part of an easie, and honest sermon, it is the sincere milk of the word, and nourishes a mans soul, though represented in its own natural simplicity, and there is hardly any Orator, but you may finde occasion to praise something of him. When Plato misliked the order & disposition of the Oration of Lysias, yet he praised the good words, and the elocution of the man. Euripides was commended for his fulness, Parmenides for his composition, Phocilides for his easinesse, Archilocus for his argument, Sophocles for the unequalnesse of his stile: So may men praise their Preacher, he speaks pertinently, or he contrives wittily, or he speaks comely, or the man is pious, or charitable, or he hath a good text, or he speaks plainly, or he is not tedious, or if he be, he is at least industrious, or he is the meslenger of God and that will not fail us, and let us love him for that; and we know those that love can easily commend any thing, because they like every thing: and they say, fair men are like angels, and the black are manly, and the pale look like honey and the stars,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

stars, and the crook-nosed are like the sons of Kings, and if they be flat, they are gentle and easie, and if they be deformed, they are humble, & not to be despised, because they have upon them the impresses of divinity, and they are the sons of God. He that despises his Preacher, is a bearer of arts and learning, not of the word of God, and though when the word of God is set off with advantages and entertainments of the better faculties of our humility, it is more usefull and of more effect, yet when the word of God is spoken truly, though but read in plain language, it will become the disciple of Jesus to love that man whom God sends, and the publike order, and the laws have imployed, rather then to despise the weaknesse of him who delivers a mighty word.

Thus it is fit that men should be affected and imployed when they hear and read sermons, comming hither not as into a theatre, where men observe the gestures and noises of the people, the brow & eyes of the most busie censurers, and make parties, and go aside with them that dislike every thing, or else admire not the the things, but the persons: But as to a sacrifice, & as unto a school, where vertue is taught & exercised, and none come but such as put themselves under discipline, and intend to grow wiser, and more wertuous to appease their passion, from violent to become smooth and even, to have their faith established, and their hope confirm'd, & their charity enlarged. They that are otherwise affected do not do their duty, but if they be so minded as they ought, I and all men of my
employment

The Epistle Dedicatory.

employment shall be secured against the tongues and faces of men who are ingeniosi in alieno libro, witty to abuse and undervalue another mans book: And yet besides these spirituall arts already reckoned, I have one security more, for (unlesse I deceive my self) I intend the glory of God sincerely, and the service of Jesus in this publication, and therefore being I do not seek my self, or my own reputation, I shall not be troubled if they be lost in the voyces of busie people, so that I be accepted of God, and found of him in the day of the Lords visitation.

My Lord, It was your charity and noblenesse that gave me opportunity to do this service (little or great) unto religion, and whoever shall finde any advantage to their soul, by reading the following discourse, if they know how to blesse God, and to blesse all them that are Gods instruments in doing them benefit, will (I hope) help to procure blessings to your Person and Family, and say a holy prayer, and name your Lordship in their Letanies, & remember, that at your own charges you have digged a well, and placed cisterns in the high wayes, that they may drink and be refreshed, and their souls may blesse you. My Lord, I hope this, even because I very much desire it, and because you exceedingly deserve it, and above all, because *God is good and gracious*, and loves to reward such a charity, and such a religion as is yours, by which you have imployed me in the service of God, and in ministeries to your Family. My Lord, I am most heartily, and for very many Dear obligations.

*Your Lordships most obliged,
most humble,
and most affectionate
servant*

TAYLOR.

Titles of the Sermons, their Order, Number, and Texts.

Sermon 1. 2. Of the Spirit of Grace.

Folio 1. 12.

Rom. 8. ver. 9. 10.

*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. * And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.*

Sermon 3. 4. The descending and entailed curse cut off. fol. 27. 40.

Exodus 20. part of the 5. verse.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

6. And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Sermon 5. 6. The invalidity of a late, or death-bed repentance.

fol. 52. 66.

Jerem. 13. 16.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains: and while ye look for light, or, (lest while ye look for light) he shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

Sermon 7. 8. The deceitfulness of the heart.

fol. 80. 92.

Jeremy 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Sermon 9. 10. 11. The faith and patience of the Saints: Or the righteous cause oppressed.

fol. 104. 119. 133.

1 Pet. 4. 17.

For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?

18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Sermon 12. 13. The mercy of the Divine judgements; or Gods method in curing sinners.

fol. 146. 159.

Romans 2. 4.

Despise not thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Sermon

Titles of the Sermons, their Order, and Number.

Sermon 14. 15. Of groweth in grace, with its proper instruments and signes. fol. 172. 183.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Sermon 16. 17. Of groweth in sin, or the severall states and degrees of sinners, with the manner how they are to be treated. fol. 197. 210.

Jude Epist. ver. 22, 23.

*And of some have compassion, making a difference: * And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.*

Sermon 18. 19. The foolish exchange. fol. 224. 237.
Matth. 16. ver. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Sermon 20. 21. 22. The Serpent and the Dove, or a discourse of Christian Prudence. fol. 251. 263. 274.

Matth. 10. later part of ver. 16.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmlesse as doves.

Sermon 23. 24. Of Christian simplicity. 289. 301.

Matth. 10. later part of ver. 16.

And harmlesse as doves.

Sermon 25. 26. 27. The miracles of the Divine Mercy. fol. 313. 327. 340.

Psal. 86. 5.

For thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee.

A Funerall Sermon, preached at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable the Countesse of Carbery. fol. 357.

2 Sam. 14. 14.

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.

A Discourse of the Divine Institution, necessity, sacrednesse, and separation of the Office Ministeriall.

Sermon I.



Sermon. I.
VV HITS VNDAY
OF THE
SPIRIT OF GRACE.

Romans 8. 9, 10.

*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. * And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.*



He day, in which the Church commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, was the first beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the Religion was professed: now the Apostles first opened their commission, and read it to all the people. [The Lord gave his Spirit] or [the Lord gave his word] and great was the company of the Preachers. For so I make bold to render that prophesie of David. Christ was the word of God, *verbum aeternum*, but the Spirit was the word of God, *verbum Patrefactum*: Christ was the word manifested in the flesh; the Spirit was the word manifested to flesh, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against the flesh. The Gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but the manifestation of the Spirit is the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and because he was this day manifested, the Gospel was this day first preached, and it became a law to us, called * the

Rom 8. 2.

Law

SERM. I.

I

law of the Spirit of life, that is, a law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal. But the Gospel is called the Spirit, 1. Because it contains in it such glorious mysteries which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter it self, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of humane understanding could have found out, the incarnation of a God; that two natures [a finite, and an infinite] could have been concentred into one hypostasis (or person): that a virgin should be a Mother, that dead men should live again, that the κόρες ὁσίων λυθίσαν, the ashes of dissolved bones should become bright as the Sun, blessed as the Angels, swift in motion as thought, clear as the purest Noone: that God should so love us, as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that himself must dye that he might pardon us: that Gods most Holy Son should give us his body to eat, and his blood to crown our chalices, and his Spirit to sanctifie our souls, to turn our bodies into temperance, our souls into *minde*s, our *minde*s into *Spirit*, our Spirit into *glory*: that he who can give us all things, who is Lord of Men and Angels, and King of all the Creatures should pray to God for us without intermission: that he who reigns over all the world, should at the day of judgement give up the kingdom to God the Father, and yet after this resignation, himself and we with him, should for ever reign the more gloriously: that we should be justified by Faith in Christ; and that charity should be a part of faith; and that both should work as acts of duty, and as acts of relation: that God should Crown the imperfect indeavours of his Saints with glory, and that a humane act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance: that the wicked for the transient pleasure of a few minutes should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains: that the waters of baptism when they are hallowed by the Spirit shall purge the soul from sin: and that the Spirit of man shall be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious elements: and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to heaven: and after all this, that all Christian People, all that will be saved must be *partakers of the Divine nature*; of the Nature, the infinite nature of God, and, must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them; these are articles of so mysterious a Philosophy, that we could have inferred them from no premises, discours'd them upon the stock of no naturall, or scientificall principles; nothing but God, and Gods Spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the Gospel is *Spiritus patefactus*, the manifestation of the Spirit *ad edificationem* (as the Apostle calls it) for edification and building us up to be a Holy Temple to the Lord.

1 Cor. 12. 7.

2

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious articles, we could not by any humane power have understood them, - unless

A unlesse the spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. *Animalis homo*, *ἡ ψυχικὸς*, that is, as S. Jude expounds the word *πνευμα μὴ ἔχων*, the animal, or the natural man, the man that hath not the Spirit cannot discern the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned, that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of righteousness, and by that eye whose bird is the Holy Dove, whose Candle is the Gospel.

SERM. I.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

B *Scio incapax te sacramenti, Impie*

Prudent.

Non posse cæcis mentibus mysterium

Haurire nostrum: nil diurnum noscimus capio.

C He that shall discourse Euclids elements to a swine, or preach (as Venerable Bede's story reports of him) to a rock, or talk Metaphysicks to a Bore, will as much prevail upon his assembly as S. Peter, and S. Paul could do upon *uncircumcised hearts and ears*, upon the indisposed Greeks, and prejudicate Jews. An Ox will relish the tender flesh of Kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual, and un sanctified man, will do the discourses of Angels, or of an Apostle, if he should come to preach the secrets of the Gospel. And we finde it true by a sad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by his servants the Prophets, by his Son, by his Apostles, by sermons, by spiritual books, by thousands of homilies, and arts of counsel and insinuation; and we sit as unconcerned as the pillars of a Church, and hear the sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a gazet: and if ever it come to passe that we tremble as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of righteousness, and judgement to come, then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to do but to give the good man a hearing, and (as Anacharsis said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to call account withall; so) our hearers make use of sermons and discourses Evangelical, but to fill up void spaces of our time; to help to tell an hour with or without tediousness: The reason of this is a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness: they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; for these things are spiritually discerned. They would think the Preacher rude, if he should say they are not Christians, they are not within the Covenant of the Gospel: but it is certain that the Spirit of Manifestation is not yet upon them, and that is the first effect of the Spirit, whereby we can be called sons of God, or relatives of Christ. If we do not apprehend, and greedily suck in the precepts of this holy Discipline as aply

SERMON. I.

as Merchants do discourse of gain, or Farmers of fair harvests, we have nothing but the Name of Christians; but we are no more such really, then Mandrakes are men, or sponges are living creatures.

3

2 Cor. 3. 6.

3. The Gospel is called *Spirit*, because it consists of Spiritual Promises, and Spiritual precepts, and makes all men that embrace it, truly to be Spiritual men: and therefore S. Paul addes an Epithete beyond this, calling it a *quickning Spirit*, that is, it puts life into our Spirits, which the law could not. The law bound us to punishment, but did not helpe us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of Eternal life to its Disciples. *The Spirit*, that is, *the Gospel* only does this: and this alone is it which comforts afflicted mindes, which puts activenesse into wearied Spirits, which inflames our cold desires, and does ἀναζωοποιεῖν blowes up sparks into live coles, and coles up to flames, and flames, to perpetual burnings: and it is impossible that any man who beleeves, and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, the never ceasing joyes, that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the Gospel should not desire them; and unlesse he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty pursuances. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madnesse in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken feaver, or the vanity of a Mistresse, or the rage of a passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However; this promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our souls.

4

4. But beyond this, is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithfull. The *Gospel* is called the *Spirit*, because by, and in the Gospel, God hath given to us not only *the Spirit of manifestation*, that is, of instruction and of Catechisme, of faith and confident assent; but *the Spirit of Confirmation* or *obsequation* to all them that believe and obey the Gospel of Christ; that is, the power of God is come upon our hearts, by which in an admirable manner we are made sure of a glorious inheritance; made sure (I say) in the nature of the thing; and our own perswasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning and a reasonable hope: in the strength of which, and by whose ayde, as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise: so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are inabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprison'd by ambition and secular designes: This the Spirit of God does work in all his Servants; and is called

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A *the spirit of obsequation, or the confirming spirit*, because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternall; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only professe in word, but live lives according to the Gospel. And this is the sense of [the Spirit] mention'd in the Text: *ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dw-ll in you*: That is, if ye be made partakers of the Gospel, or of the *spirit of manifestation*, if ye be truly intitl'd to God, and have receiued the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are *spirituall*, ye are *in the spirit*: if ye have the Spirit in one sense to any purpose, ye have it also in another: B if the Spirit be in you, you are in it: if it hath given you hope, it hath also inabled and ascerain'd your duty. For *the spirit of manifestation* will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not *the spirit of obsequation*: if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to great purposes of holinesse, all other pretences are vaine, *ye are still in the flesh*, which shall never inherit the kingdome of God.

In the Spirit] that is, in the power of the spirit; so the Greeks call him *ἐν δυνάμει* who is possessed by a spirit, whom God hath filled with a coelestiall immision; he is said to be *in God*, when God is *in him*: and it is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards: they are *in custodia*, that is, in their power, under their command, moved at their dispose, they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visiters whom they appoint, and must be imployed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit, that is, they beleeeve as he teaches, they work as he inables, they choose what he calls good, they are friends of his friends, and they hate with his hatred: with this only difference, that persons in custody, are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills: but they that are under the command of the Spirit, do all things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cherefully: and their will is now the prisoner, but it is *in libera custodia*, the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else, because it is extreemly in love with this: as the Saints and Angels in their state of Beatific vision, cannot choose but love God: and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessen'd, because the object fills all the capacities of the will, and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthinesse, or defect in the object, or the apprehension: but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation, when it intirely pursues a good with so certain determination, and clear election, that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence: Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons, of God: it is an holy and amiable captivity to the Spirit: the will of man is in love with those chains, which

SERM. I.

which drawes to God, and loves the fetters that confine us to the pleasures and religion of the kingdome. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrain'd, and his head is prisoner when it is encircled with a crown: So when the Son of God had made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as Princes within the circles of their Diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the law is a law of liberty, and *his service is perfect freedom*; and the more we are subjects, the more *we shall reign as Kings*; and the faster we run, the easier is our burden, and Christs yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion, without them the body falls: and we do not pity birds, when in summer we wish them unfeathered and callow, or bald as egges, that they might be cooler and lighter: such is the load and captivity of the soul, when we do the work of God and are his servants, and under the Government of the spirit: They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of out-laws, and the licentiousness of anarchy, and the freedom of sad widows and distressed Orphans: For so Rebels and fools and children long to be rid of their Princes, and their Guardians, and their Tutors, that they may be accursed without law, and be undone without control, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher and without discipline. He that *is in the Spirit* is under Tutours and Governours, until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great Heirs are; only, the first seizure the Spirit makes, is upon the will. He that loves the yoke of Christ, and the discipline of the Gospel, he *is in the Spirit*, that is, in the spirits power.

Upon this foundation, the Apostle hath built these two propositions. 1. Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, he does not belong to Christ at all: he is not partaker of his Spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of his glory.

2. Whosoever is in Christ, is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ, that is, lives a Spiritual, a holy and a sanctified life. These are to be considered distinctly.

1. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediately before the ascension, our blessed Saviour bid his Disciples *tarry in Jerusalem till they should receive the promise of the Father*. Whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in the actual Communion of the Church of God shall certainly receive this promise. *For it is made to you and to your children (saith S. Peter) and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great instrument of distinction between the Law and the Gospel. In the Law God gave his Spirit, 1. to some; to them, 2. extraregularly, 3. without solemnity, 4. in small proportions, like the dew upon Gideons fleece;

A fleece; a little portion was wet sometime with the dew of heaven, when all the earth besides was dry: And the Jews called it *filiam vocis*, the daughter of a voice, still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate by way of enthusiasme, rather then of instruction, and God spake by the Prophets, transmitting the sound, as through an Organ pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understand not. But in the Gospel, the spirit is given without measure; first poured forth upon our head Christ Jesus; then descending upon the beard of Aaron, the Fathers of the Church, and thence falling like the tears of the balsome of Judea upon the foot of the plant, upon the lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a solemn ceremony, and conveyed by a Sacrament: and is now, not the Daughter of a voice, but the Mother of many voices, of divided tongues, and united hearts, of the tongues of Prophets, and the duty of Saints, of the Sermons of Apostles, and the wisdom of Governours; It is the Parent of boldness, and fortitude to Martyrs, the fountain of learning to Doctors, an Ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the ship, and bounds of the Catholike Church: so that Old men and yong men, maidens and boyes, the scribe and the unlearned, the Judge and the Advocate, the Priest and the people are full of the Spirit, if they belong to God: Moses's wish is fulfilled, and all the Lords people are Prophets in some sense or other.

In the wisdom of the Ancient it was observed, that there are four great cords which tye the heart of Man to inconvenience, and a prison, making it a servant of vanity, and an heir of corruption
1. *Pleasure*, and 2. *Pain*. 3. *Feare*, and 4. *Desire*.

Πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα χορδὸν δ' ἔλον
τὴν ἡδονὴν ἐπιθυμίαν, λύπην, φόβον
ἀσκήσας γὰρ καὶ πολλὰς μάχης δεῖ.

These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and all the powers that God hath given him,

ἔτσι γὰρ, ἔτσι καὶ διαπλῆγῶν ἀδὲ
χαρεῖσι καὶ κυκλῶσιν ἀνθρώπων κίαν. said Agathon.

E These are those evil Spirits that possess the heart of man and mingle with all his actions; so that either men are tempted to 1. *lust by pleasure*, or 2. *to baser arts by covetousness*, or 3. *to impatience by sorrow*, or 4. *to dishonourable actions by fear*: and this is the state of man by nature, and under the law; and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cur'd these four inconveniences, and restrained, or sweetned these unwholsome waters.

I. God

SERM. I.

1. God gave us his Spirit that we might be insensible of worldly pleasures, having our souls wholly fill'd with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when Gods Spirit hath entred into us and possessed us as his Temple, or as his dwelling, instantly we begin to taste Manna, and to loath the diet of Egypt; we begin to consider concerning heaven, and to prefer eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the soul, aboue the sortish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a drunken meeting cannot make recompence for the pains of a surfet, and that nights intemperance; much lesse for the torments of eternity: Then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustfull appetites is not worth the charges of a Chirurgeon, much lesse can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sicknesse, the death and the hell of lustfull persons; Then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a crown unjustly; or that for the hazard of a victory, he should throw away all his hopes of heaven certainly.

A man that hath tasted of Gods Spirit can instantly discern the madnesse that is in rage, the folly and the disease that is in envy, the anguish and tediousness that is in lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith, and telling a lie; and understands things truly as they are; that is, that charity is the greatest noblenesse in the world; that religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that humility is the surest way to honour; and all these relishes are nothing but antepasts of heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow the Lamb, and the virgins sing there where the Mother of God shall reign; and the zealous converters of souls, and labourers in Gods vineyard shall worship eternally where S. Peter and S. Paul do wear their crown of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God; the very expectation of which proceeding from a hope begotten in us by the spirit of manifestation, and bred up and strengthened by the spirit of obsequation is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a spiritual man can no more be removed, or intic'd from the love of God, and of religion, then the Moon from her Orb, or a Mother from loving the son of her joyes, and of her sorrows.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

This was observed by S. Peter, [*As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*] When once we have tasted the grace of God, the sweetnesse of his Spirit; then, no food but the food of Angels, no cup but the cup of Salvation, the *Divining cup*, in which we drink *Salvation to our God*, and call upon the Name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving; and there is no greater externall testimony that we are *in the spirit*, and that *the spirit dwells in us*, then if we finde joy and delight, and spiritual pleasures in the greatest mysteries

A mysteries of our religion; if we communicate often, and that with appetite and a forward choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly fixed upon God, & upon the offices of a holy worship. He that loaths good meat is sick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to the *food of Angels, the wine of elect souls*, is fit to succeed the Prodigal at his banquet of sin and husks; and to be *partaker of the table of Devils*; but all they who have Gods Spirit, love to feast at the supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the spirit, or servants to the Spirit. I have read of a spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream,
 B but such as made great impression upon him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasmes, not easily disbanding, and when he awaked he knew not his cell, he remembered not him that slept in the same dorter, nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oyl from wine, but cal'd out for his vision again, *Redde mihi campos meos floridos, columnam auream, comitem Hieronymum, assistentes Angelos*: give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion S. Jerome, my assistant Angels: and this lasted till he was told of his duty, and matter of obedience, and the fear of a sin had disincharmed him, and caused him to take care lest he lose the substance out
 C of greedinesse to possesse the shadow.

And if it were given to any of us to see Paradise, or the third heaven (as it was to S. Paul) could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any Guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but Heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead thither? Now what a vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain him. They that have him really and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create, or enlarge our appetites of things below: Spirituall men are not design'd to raign upon earth, but to reign over their lusts and sottish appetites. The
 D Spirit doth not enflame our thirst of wealth, but extinguishes it, and makes us to *esteem all things as losse, and as dung so that we may gain Christ*: No gain then is pleasant but godlinesse, no ambition but longings after heaven, no revenge but against our selves for sinning; nothing but God and Christ: *Deus meus & omnia*: and *date nobis animas, cetera vobis tollite* (as the king of Sodom said to Abraham) Secure but the souls to us, and take our goods. Indeed this is a good signe that we have the Spirit.

S. John spake a hard saying, but by the spirit of manifestation we
 E are all taught to understand it. "*Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*" The seed of God] is the spirit which hath a plastic power to efform us *in similitudinem filiorum Dei*, into the image of the sons of God: and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit

1 Ep. 3. 9.

rit

SERM. I.

Heb. 6. 4.

rit dwells in us *we cannot sin*; that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures to sin: And as we say, we cannot endure such a position, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature: so all spirituall men, all that are born of God, and the seed of God remains in them, *they cannot sin*; cannot without trouble, and doing against our natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can sip up by little draughts, mixtures of Aloes & Rhubarb, of Henbane, or the deadly Nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally, or willingly, cheerfully, or with delight. Every sin is against a good mans nature, he is ill at ease when he hath missed his usual prayers, he is amaz'd if he have fallen into an error; he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin, as he thinks of an enemy, or the horrors of a midnight apparition: for all his capacities, his understandings, and his choosing faculties are filled up with the opinion and perswasions, with the love, and with the desires of God: and this I say, is the Great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an antidote against worldly pleasures: And therefore S. Paul joyns them as consequent to each other [*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, &c.*] First, we are enlightened in Baptisme, and by the Spirit of manifestation, the revelations of the Gospel: then we relish and taste interior excellencies, and we receive the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of confirmation, and he gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come; that is, of the great efficacy that is in the Article of eternall life, to perswade us to religion and holy living: then we feel, that as the belief of that Article dwells upon our understanding, and is incorporated into our wils and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to despise all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortifie it by the powers of this Article: [those are the powers of the world to come.

2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ as an antidote against sorrows, against impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the crosse. There are in scripture noted two births besides the naturall; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The first is to be born of water and the Spirit. It is one thing signified by a divided appellative, by two substantives, [water and the Spirit.] that is, *Spiritus aqueus*, the Spirit moving upon the waters of Baptisme. The second is to be born of Spirit and fire, for so Christ was promised to baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire; that is, *cum spiritu igneo*, with a fiery spirit, the Spirit as it descended in Pentecost in the shape of fiery tongues. And as the

A the watry spirit washed away the sins of the Church, so the spirit of fire enkindles charity and the love of God, το πνεῦμα καθαρίζει, το ὕδωρ ἀγνίζει (saies Plutarch) the Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it inables the Church with gifts and graces: And from these there is another operation of the new birth, but the same Spirit, the spirit of rejoycing, or *spiritus exultans, spiritus letitie*. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in beleeving, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. There is a certain joy and spiritual rejoycing, that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow; a joy given to allay the sorrows of secular troubles, and to alleviate the burden of persecution. This S. Paul notes to this purpose [*And ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.*] Worldly afflictions and spirituall joyes, may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply us out of his store-houses, the sorrows of this world would be mete and unmixt, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for naturall confidences. For who shall make him recompence that lost his life in a Duel, fought about a draught of wine, or a cheaper woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments, in testimony of a proposition of naturall Philosophy? And by what instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick, and poor, and disgraced and vitious, and lies cursing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That mans condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, *the Spirit of comfort*. Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking in the inheritance of Jesus. *This is the faith and patience of the Saints*, this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordiall of all languishing sinners, the support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtfull, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall finde it again with advantage in the day of restitution: and this comfort was so manifest in the first dayes of Christianity, that it was no infrequent thing to see holy persons court a Martyrdom with a fondnesse as great as is our impatience, and timorousnesse in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us we are ἀνὴρ-ψυχῶν inopis nos, atque pusilli finxerunt animi; we have little souls, little faith, and as little patience; we fall at every stumbling block, and sink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates, or our persons, till the Spirit of God fills us with joy in beleeving: and a man that is in a great joy, cares not for any trouble that is lesse then his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that he hath turned it into a precept, *Rejoyce evermore; and Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again,*

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Rom. 15. 13.

1 Thess. 1. 6.

1 Thess. 5. 16.

SERM II.
Rom. 12. 12.

again, I say rejoyce. But this rejoycing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us, *ἐν ἡμῖν χαρίζεται*; so the Apostle, *Rejoycing in hope.* For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrowes; yet that is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it: but the hope of life eternall can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing

—— *ibimus, ibimus*
utcumque precedes, supremum
Carpere iter comites parati

To death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternall: as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwrack: And I desire you by the way to observe, how good a God we serve, and how excellent a Religion Christ taught, when one of his great precepts is, that we should *rejoyce and be exceeding glad?* and God hath given us the spirit of rejoycing, not a fullen, melancholy spirit, not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the Spirit of his Son, consigning us by a holy conscience to *joyes unspeakable and full of glory*: And from hence you may also infer, that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident they put out their own fires, which the spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behinde the cloud.

Part II.

3. **T**He Spirit of God is given us, as an antidote against evil concupiscences, and sinfull desires, and is then called the spirit of prayer and supplication. For ever since the affections of the outward man prevail'd upon the ruines of the soul, all our desires were sensual, and therefore hurtfull: for ever after, our body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance, or imperfection of Gentile Philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths of blood, and their hearts of malice; and they prayed accordingly, for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, for the satisfaction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by any lust, by any Devil whatsoever.

The Jews were better taught, for God was their teacher, and he gave the spirit to them in single rayes. But as the *spirit of ob-*
signation

A signation was given to them under a *seal*, and within a *veile*; so the spirit of *Manifestation* or *patefaction* was like the gem of a vine, or the bud of a rose, plain *indices* and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetnesse: but yet scarce out of the doors of their causes; they had the infancy of knowledge; and revelations to them were given as Catechisme is taught to our children; which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the tongue of a bee, and understand with the heart of a childe, that is, weakly and imperfectly: and they understood so little; that 1. They thought God heard them not unlesse they spake their prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips: and 2. Their forms of prayer were so few and seldome, that to teach a forme of prayer, or to compose a collect was thought a work fit for a Prophet, or the founder of an institution. 3. Adde to this, that as their promises were temporall, so were their hopes: as were their hopes so were their desires; and according to their desires, so were their prayers. And although the Psalms of *David* was their Great office, and the treasury of devotion to their Nation (and very worthily) yet it was full of wishes for temporals, invocations of GOD the *Avenge*r, on GOD the *Lord of Hosts*, on God the Enemy of their Enemies; and they desired their Nation to be prospered; and themselves blessed, and distinguished from all the world, by the effects of such desires. This was the state of prayer in their Synagogue; save onely that it had also this allay, 4. That their addresses to GOD were crasse, material, typical and full of shadows, and imagery, paterns of things to come, and so in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect.

B But that we may see how *great things the Lord hath done for us*, God hath *powred his spirit into our hearts*, the spirit of prayer and supplication, and now. 1. Christians pray in their spirit, with sighs and groans, and know that GOD who dwells within them, can as clearly distinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit as plainly as he knows the voice of his own thunder, or could discern the letter of the law written in the tables of stone by the finger of God. 2. likewise the spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. That is, when God sends an affliction or persecution upon us, we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand upon the wound, and never take it off, but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadnesse; and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sicknesse, to be delivered from a Tyrant, to be snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger, But the

B spirit

SERM. II.

spirit of God hath from all sad accidents drawn the veil of error and the cloud of intolerableness, and hath taught us that our happiness cannot consist in freedom, or deliverances from persecutions, but in patience, resignation, and noble sufferance; and that we are not then so blessed, when God hath turn'd our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of virtues: so that now *the spirit having helped our infirmities*, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our sorrows and impatience by this proposition, that *[All things work together for the good of them that fear God]* he hath taught us to pray for grace, for patience under the crosse for Charity to our persecutors; for rejoicing in tribulations, for perseverance and boldness in the faith; and for whatsoever will bring us safely to Heaven.

3. Whereas onely a *Moses*, or a *Samuel*, a *David*, or a *Daniel*, a *John* the Baptist, or the *Messias* himself could describe and indite formes of prayer and thanksgiving to the time and accent of Heaven, now every wise and good Man is instructed perfectly in the Scriptures (which are the writings of the spirit) what things he may, and what things he must ask for.

4. The Spirit of God hath made our services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and religion, the consequents of a spiritual sacrifice, and of a holy union with God: The prayer of a Christian is with the effects of the *spirit of Sanctification*; and then we *pray with the Spirit*, when we pray with Holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift of the Spirit. And this is by Saint *James* called *[the prayer of faith]* and is said to be certain that it shall prevail. Such a praying with the Spirit, when our prayers are the voyces of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sanctified by Gods spirit, shall never fail of its effect; because then it is, that *the spirit himself maketh intercession for us*: that is, hath enabled us to do it upon his strengths, we speak his sense, we live his life, we breath his accents, we desire in order to his purposes, and our persons are Gracious by his Holiness, and are accepted by his interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ. This is *praying with the spirit*. To which by way of explication I adde these two annexes of holy prayer, in respect of which also, every good man prayes with the spirit.

5. The spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our prayers, and this Saint *Paul* calls *[serving of God in his Spirit, ἐν πνεύματι κυρίου]*, that is, with a willing minde; not as *Jonas* did his errand, but as Christ did die for us, he was straitned till he

A he had accomplished it. And they that say their prayers out of custome onely, or to comply with external circumstances, or collateral advantages, or pray with trouble and unwillingness, give a very great testimony that they have not the spirit of Christ within them: that *spirit which maketh intercession for the Saints*: but he that delighteth in his prayers, not by a sensible or phantastic pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living, and praying accordingly, that man hath the spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this spirit it is that Christ prayes in Heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace, our prayers are an abominable sacrifice, and send up to God no better a perfume, then if wee burned *assa fatida*, or the raw flesh of a murdered man upon the altar of incense.

B 6. The spirit of Christ and of prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together. For as our faith is, and our trust in God, so is our hope, and so is our prayer, weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works, and in desires. For the words of prayer are no part of the spirit of prayer: words may be the body of it, but the spirit of prayer alwayes consists in holiness, that is, in holy desires, and holy actions: words are not properly capable of being holy; all words are in themselves servants of things, and the holiness of a prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expresseion, but in the spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its imployment: this is the verification of that great Prophecie which Christ made; that *[in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth]* that is, with a pure minde, with holy desires, for spiritual things according to the minde of the spirit in imitation of Christs intercession, with perseverance, with charity, or love. That is the spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the Gospel, and the formalities of prayer as they are Christian and Evangelicall.

E 7. Some men have thought of a seventh way, and explicate our praying in the spirit, by a mere volubility of language: which indeed is a direct undervaluing the spirit of God and of Christ, *the spirit of manifestation and intercession*; it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the law, it is to worship God in outward forms, and to think that Gods service consists in shels and rinds: in lips and voyces, in shadows and images of things: it is to retire from Christ to *Moses*, and at the best, it is a going from real graces to imaginary gifts: and

SERM. II.

when praying with the spirit hath in it so many excellencies, and consists of so many parts of holiness, and sanctification, and is an act of the inner man, we shall be infinitely mistaken, if we let go this substance, and catch at a shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary, uselesse gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the spirit of Christ, as to make it no other then the breath of our lungs. * For though it might be possible that at the first, and when formes of prayer were few and seldome, the spirit of God might dictate the very words to the Apostles, and first Christians; yet it follows not that therefore he does so still to all that pretend praying with the spirit. For if he did not then, at the first, dictate words (as we know not whether he did or no) why shall he be supposed to do so now? If he did then; it follows that he does not now; because his doing it then, was sufficient for all men since: for so the forms taught by the spirit were patterns for others to imitate in all the descending ages of the Church. There was once an occasion so great, that the spirit of God did think it a work fit for him to teach a man to weave silke, or embroyder gold, or work in brasse, (as it happened to Bezaleel and Aholiah:) But then every weaver or worker in brasse may by the same reason pretend that he works by the spirit, as that he prays by the spirit, if by prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of working it was certain that the spirit did teach, in the case of inditing or forming the words it is not certain whether he did or no; yet because in both it was extraordinary (if it was at all) and ever since, in both it is infinitely needlesse; to pretend the Spirit in forms of every mans making (even though they be of contrary religions, and pray one against the other) it may serve an end of a phantastic and hypochondriacall religion, or a secret ambition, but not the ends of God, or the honour of the Spirit.

Levit. 26. 1.

The Jews in their declensions to folly and idolatry did worship the stone of imagination, that is, certain smooth images in which by art magic pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stoln goods; and God severely forbad this baseness: but we also have taken up this folly, and worship the stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantasmes and speculative images in our phansy, and we fall down and worship them; never considering that the spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of Christian religion; or rather is it that duty in which all graces are concentred. Prayer is charity,

A charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to Gods will, a desiring according to the desires of Heaven, an imitation of Christs intercession; and prayer must suppose all holiness, or else it is nothing: and therefore all that in which men need Gods Spirit, all that is in order to prayer. Baptisme is but a prayer, and the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper is but a prayer; a prayer of sacrifice representative, and a prayer of oblation, and a prayer of intercession, and a prayer of thanksgiving: and obedience is a prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then he hath sanctified the prayer of the man, and not till then; and if ever there was, or could be any other praying with the spirit, it was such a one as a wicked man might have, and therefore it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the saints and men of the world. But this only (which I have described from the fountains of Scripture) is that which a good man can have, and therefore this is it in which we ought to rejoyce; *that he that glories, may glory in the Lord.*

C Thus I have (as I could) described the effluxes of the Holy Spirit upon us in his great chanel. But the great effect of them is this; That as by the arts of the spirits of darknesse, and our own malice our souls are turned into flesh, (not in the naturall sense, but in the moral, and Theological) and *animalis homo* is the same with *carnalis*, that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is *flesh* in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: So on the other side, by the Grace of God, and the promise of the Father, and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh, and reduced back to the intirenesse of animall operations, but they are heightened into *spirit*, and transform'd into *a new nature*: And this is a new Article, and now to be considered.

D S. Hierom tels of the Custome of the Empire; When a Tyrant was overcome, they us'd to break the head of his Statues, and upon the same Trunk, to set the head of the Conquerour, and so it pass'd wholly for the new Prince: So it is in the kingdome of Grace. As soon as the Tyrant sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new Name given us, and we are esteemed a new Creation; and not onely changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an essentiall constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so: and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the Gospel. Every man naturally consists of soul and body: but every Christian man that belongs to Christ, hath more. For he hath *body*, and *soul*, and *spirit*. My text is plain for it. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*: and by [*Spirit*] is not meant onely the graces of God, and his gifts enabling

SERM. II.

1 Thess. 5. 23.

Heb. 4. 12.

2 Epist. 1. 4.

abling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man then so. But as when God made man, he made him after his own image, and breath'd into him *the spirit of life*, and he was made *in animam viventem, into a living soul*; then he was made a man: So in the new creation, Christ *by whom God made both the worlds*, intends to conform us to his image, and he hath given us *the spirit of adoption*, by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made *new creatures*, capable of a new state, intitled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wils: *Vetera transferunt, & esse omnia nova facta sunt*; all things are become new: And this is called *the seed of God* when it relates to the principle and cause of this production: But the thing that is produced is a *spirit*, and that is as much in nature beyond a soul, as a soul is beyond a body. This great Mystery I should not utter but upon the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible Doctor, I mean S. Paul, who from Christ taught the Church more secrets, then all the whole Colledge besides: [*And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blamelesse unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*] We are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unlesse besides our souls and bodies, our *spirit* also be kept blamelesse. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above humane reason: but *the word of God* (saith the same Apostle) *is sharper then a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit*: and that hath taught us to distinguish the principle of a new life, from the principle of the old, the celestiall from the naturall; and thus it is,

The spirit (as I now discourse of it) is a principle infused into us by God, when we become his children, whereby we live the life of Grace, and understand the secrets of the Kingdome, and have passions and desires of things beyond, and contrary to our naturall appetites, enabling us not only to sobriety (which is the duty of the body) not only to justice, which is the rectitude of the soul, but to such a sanctity as makes us like to God. * For so saith the Spirit of God; *Be ye holy as I am; be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as he is perfect*: which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be in *similitudine nature*, in the likenesse of that nature which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it, we might resemble his excellency, and holinesse. And this I conceive to be the meaning of S. Peter [*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godlinesse, (that is, to this new life of godlinesse) through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that*

A *that by these you might be partakers of the Divine nature* (so we read it) But it is something mistaken; it is not τὴν θεῶν φύσιν, [*The Divine nature*] for Gods nature is indivisible, and incommunicable; but it is spoken *participativè*, or *per analogiam*, [*partakers of a Divine nature*] that is of this new and God-like nature, given to every person that serves God, whereby he is sanctified and made the childe of God, and framed into the likenesse of Christ. The Greeks generally call this χάρισμα, a gracious gift, an extraordinary super-addition to nature, not a single gift in order to single purposes; but an universall principle, and it remains upon all good men during their lives, and after their death; and is that *white stone* spoken of in the Revelation; and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that hath it: And by this, Gods sheep at the day of judgement shall be discerned from goats: If their spirits be presented to God pure and unblameable, this great χάρισμα, this talent which God hath given to all Christians to improve, in the banks of grace and of Religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the fulnesse of the measure of Christ (for it is Christs Spirit, and as it is in us it is called, *the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*) then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall passe into an eternall inheritance in the portion of our elder Brother.

Apoc. 2. 17.

Philip. 1. 19.

C I need not to apply this Discourse: The very mystery it self is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable, by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness.

Quisquis magna dedit voluit sibi magna rependi;

D He that gives great things to us, ought to have great acknowledgements; and Seneca said concerning wise men; That he that doth benefit to others, hides those benefits as a man layes up great treasures in the earth, which he must never see with his eyes, unlesse a great occasion forces him to dig the graves, and produce that which he buried; but all the while, the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation: so it is with God and us: For this huge benefit of the Spirit, which God gives us, is for our good, deposited into our souls, not made for forms and ostentation, not to be looked upon, or serve little ends, but growing in the secret of our souls, and swelling up to a treasure, making us in this world rich by title and relation, but it shall be produced in the great necessities of doomeſday. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of Gods Spirit, God will kindle another in his anger, that shall never be quenched: but if we entertain Gods Spirit with our own purities, and imploy it diligently, and serve it willingly, (for Gods Spirit is a loving spirit) then we shall really be turned into spirits. *Irenæus* had a proverbial saying, *Perfecti sunt qui tria sine querelâ Deo exhibent;* They that present three things right to God, they

E

SERM. II.

they are perfect; that is, a chaste body, a righteous soul, and a holy spirit; and the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amisse, (though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery:) The soul of man in this life, is *in potentia ad esse spiritum*, it is designed to be a spirit, but in the world to come, it shall be actually as very a spirit as an Angel is: and this state is expressed by the Apostle, calling it, [*the earnest of the spirit*] that is, here it is begun, and given us as an antepast of glory, and a principle of Grace; but then we shall have it *in plenitudine*;

— *regit idem spiritus artus*

Orbe alio —

Here, and there, it is the same; but *here* we have the earnest, *there* the riches and the inheritance.

But then, if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we receive not *the Spirit of God in vain*, but remember it is a new life; and as no man can pretend, that a person is alive, that doth not alwayes do the works of life; so it is certain, no man hath the Spirit of God, but he that lives the life of grace, and doth the works of the Spirit, that is *in all holiness, and justice, and sobriety*.

Spiritus qui accedit animo, vel Dei est, vel Daemonis (said Tertulian.) Every man hath within him the Spirit of God, or the spirit of the devil. The spirit of fornication is an unclean devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of malice or uncharitableness; for the Spirit of God is the Spirit of love: for as by purities Gods Spirit sanctifies the body, so by love he purifies the soul, and makes the soul grow into a spirit, into a Divine nature. But God knowes that even in Christian societies, we see the devils walk up and down every day, and every hour; the devil of uncleanness, and the devil of drunkenness, the devil of malice, and the devil of rage, the spirit of filthy speaking, and the spirit of detraction, a proud spirit, and the spirit of rebellion; and yet all call [*Christian*]. It is generally supposed, that unclean spirits walk in the night; and so it used to be; *for they that are drunk, are drunk in the night*, said the Apostle: but Suidas tells of certain *Empuse*, that used to appear at Noon, at such time as the Greeks did celebrate the Funerals of the Dead; and at this day some of the Russians fear the *Noon-day Devil*, which appeareth like a mourning widdow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their armes and legs, unless they worship her. The Prophet David speaketh of both kindes: *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terrour by night, and a ruin & Daemonio meridiano, from the Devil at noon thou shalt be free*. It were happy if we were so; but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness, in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their Scenes of darkness in the face of the Sun, in open defiance

Psal. 91.

A ance of God, and all lawes, and all modesty. There is in such men the spirit of impudence, as well as of impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher; for every habituall sin doth not onely put us into the power of the devill, but turns us into his very nature: just as the holy Ghost transforms us into the image of God.

Here therefore I have a greater Argument to perswade you to holy living, then Moses had to the sons of Israel. *Behold, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing*: so said Moses; but I adde, that I have upon the stock of this Scripture, set before
 B you, the good Spirit and the bad, God, and the devil: choose unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, you are of your father the Devil, ye are begot of his principles, and follow his pattern, and shall passe into his portion, when ye are led captive by him at his will; and remember what a sad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternall portion of Devils. But he
 C that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father, and his Lord, he despises the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spirituall, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and his support, and Religion is his imployment, and *godliness is his gain*, and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God, and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in obedience to God, and in charity to his brother: and of such a man we cannot make judgement by his fortune, or by his acquaintance, by his circumstances, or by his adherencies, for they are the appendages of a naturall man: but *the spirituall is judged of no man*:
 D that is, the rare excellencies that make him happy, do not yet make him illustrious, unlesse we will reckon Vertue to be a great fortune, and holinesse to be great Wisdome, and God to be the best Friend, and Christ the best Relative, and the Spirit the hugest advantage, and Heaven the greatest Reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit down and reckon the felicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this; That since the Spirit of God is a new nature, and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught, and enabled to serve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of such actions, which men are pleased to call *sins of infirmity*. Whosoever hath the Spirit of God, lives the life of grace; The Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often sins which we think unavoidable, because we call them, *naturall infirmities*.

[But

SERM. II.

[*But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.*] The state of sin is a state of death; the state of a man under the law, was a state of bondage, and infirmity, (as S. Paul largely describes him in the seventh Chapter to the Romans) but he that hath the Spirit is made alive, and free, and strong, and a conquerour over all the powers, and violencies of sin; such a man resists temptations, falls not under the assault of sin, returns not to the sin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and sorrow: but he that falls under a crime, to which he still hath a strong, and vigorous inclination, he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then sins again, and then weeps again, and calls himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to that circle, this man hath not the Spirit; *for where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty*, there is no such bondage and a returning folly to the commands of sin. But because men deceive themselves with calling this bondage, a pitiable and excusable infirmity, it will not be uselesse to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men from the state of a pretended infirmity, fall into a real death.

i. No great sin is a *sin of infirmity*, or excusable upon that stock. But that I may be understood, we must know that every sin is in some sense or other, a *sin of infirmity*. When a man is in the state of spirituall sicknesse or death, he is in a state of infirmity, for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his judgement, and weak in his reasonings, impotent in his passions, of childish resolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist, as easily as the rude conjuncture of uncombining cables; in the violence of a Northern tempest: and he that is thus in infirmity, cannot be excused; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to do his duty. Such a man is a *servant of sin*, a slave of the Devil, an heir of corruption, absolutely under command; and every man is so, who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it: for what can he be but a servant of sin, who fain would avoid it but cannot; that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him; Christ dwels not in his soul, *for where the Son is, there is liberty*: and all that are in the Spirit are sons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin. But then there are also *sins of infirmity*, which are single actions, intervening seldom, in little instances, unavoidable, or through a faultlesse ignorance. Such as these are alwayes the allays of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath payd, and they are never to be accounted to good men, save onely to make them more wary, and more humble. Now concerning these, it is, that I say; No great sin is a sin of excusable, or unavoidable infirmity. Because whosoever hath

- A hath received the Spirit of God, hath sufficient knowledge of his duty, and sufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of minde, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to piety, and religion. No man can justly say, that it is a sin of infirmity that he was drunk; For there are but three causes of every sin (a fourth is not imaginable.) 1. If ignorance cause it, the sin is as full of excuse, as the ignorance was innocent. But no Christian can pretend this to drunkenness, to murder, to rebellion, to uncleanness. For what Christian is so uninstructed but that he knows Adultery is a sin? 2. Want of observation, is the cause of many indiscreet and foolish actions. Now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape, because in the whole, it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit, as to consider, and reflect upon every word, and every thought: but it is in this case in Gods lawes otherwise then in mans: the great flies cannot passe thorow without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk, and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbours wife before he be aware; therefore the lesse the instance be, the more likely is it to be a sin of infirmity: and yet if it be never to little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of infirmity.
- B 3. But because great crimes cannot pretend to passe undiscernably, it follows that they must come in at the door of *malice*, that is, of want of Grace, in the absence of the Spirit; they destroy where ever they come, and the man dies if they passe upon him.
- C

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2

3

- It is true, there is *flesh and blood* in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule: the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail. And it were a strange condition, if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation, and death, without all difference, save only that the godly sins *unwillingly*, and the ungodly sins *willingly*. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevaricated, the pretended unwillingness is the signe of a greater, and a baser slavery, and of a condition lesse to be endured. For the servitude which is against me is intolerable, but if I choose the state of a servant, I am free in my minde,
- D

——— *Libertatis servaveris umbram*

Si quicquid jubere velis ———

- certain it is, that such a person who fain would, but cannot choose but commit adultery, or drunkenness, is the veriest slave to sin that can be imagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit, and by the liberty of the sons of God; *and there is no other difference, but that the mistaken good man feels his slavery, and sees his chains, and his fetters; but therefore it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be a slave. No man can be a servant of sin,
- E

—— * Tot rebus
iniquis
Parvulus vi-
di-venia est
hac sola pud-
ris, Degeneris-
que metus, nil
jam potuisse ne-
gari. Lucan.

SER. II. sin, and a servant of righteousness at the same time, but every man that hath the Spirit of God, is a servant of righteousness; and therefore whosoever finde great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation, (as to the present) because they willingly, or unwillingly (it matters not much, whether of the two) are servants of sin.

2. Sins of infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness, only according to the weakness or infirmity of a mans understanding: So far as men (without their own fault) understand not their duty, or are possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse, or discerning powers, and acts, so far if a sin creeps upon them, it is as naturall, and as free from a law, as is the action of a childe; But if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminall and not excused by our infirmity; because it is chosen: and a mans will hath no infirmity, but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions, and sinfull appetites: and that infirmity is the state of unregeneration.

3. The violence or strength of a temptation is not sufficient to excuse an action, or to make it accountable upon the stock of a pitiable and innocent infirmity; if it leaves the understanding still able to judge; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from our selves, and because we have in us a principle of baseness which this temptation meets, and only perswades me to act, because I love it. Joseph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man: and it is certain there are not many Christians but would fall under it, and call it, *a sin of infirmity*, since they have been taught so to abuse themselves, by sowing fig-leaves before their nakedness: but because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail upon him. Some men cannot by any art of hell be tempted to be drunk; others can no more resist an invitation to such a meeting, then they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart blood; because their evil habits made them weak on that part: And some man that is fortified against revenge it may be will certainly fall under a temptation to uncleanness: for every temptation is great or small, according as the man is; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand pound a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie, against his duty, or his conscience.

4. No habitual sin, (that is) no sin that returns constantly, or frequently, that is repented of, and committed again, and still repented of, and then again committed, no such sin is excusable with a pretence of infirmity: Because that sin is certainly noted, and

A and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weaknesse of nature, but the weaknesse of grace: the principle of this, is an evil spirit, an habituall averſation from God, a domination and empire of ſin: and as no man for his inclination, and aptneſſe to the ſins of the fleſh, is to be called carnall, if he corrects his inclinations, and turns them into vertues: ſo no man can be called ſpirituall for his good wiſhes, and apt inclinations to goodneſſe, if theſe inclinations paſſe not into acts, and theſe acts into habits, and holy cuſtoms, and walkings, and converſation with God. But as natural concupiſcence corrected becomes the matter of vertue: ſo
 B theſe good inclinations, and condemnings of our ſin, if they be ineffective and end in ſinfull actions, are the perfect ſignes of a reprobate, and unregenerate eſtate.

The ſum is this, An animal man, a man under the law, a carnall man (for as to this, they are all one) is ſold under ſin, he is a ſervant of corruption, he falls frequently into the ſame ſin to which he is tempted, he commends the Law, he conſents to it that it is good, he does not commend ſin, he does ſome little things againſt it, but they are weak and imperfect, his luſt is stronger, his paſſions violent, and unmortified, his habits vitious, his cuſtoms ſinfull, and he lives in the regions of ſin, and dies and enters into its portion; But a ſpirituall man, a man that is in
 C the ſtate of grace, who is born a new of the ſpirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Chriſt, *he is led by the Spirit*, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigorouſly: and although he ſometimes ſlips, yet it is but ſeldom, it is in ſmall inſtances: his life is ſuch as he cannot pretend to be juſtified by works, and merit, but by mercy, and the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, yet he never ſins great ſins: If he does, he is for that preſent *ſaine from Gods favour*; and though poſſibly he may recover, (and the ſmaller, or ſeldomer the ſin is, the ſooner may be
 D his reſtitution) yet for the preſent (I ſay) he is out of Gods favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, ſins not by any deliberate, conſultive, knowing act; he is incident to ſuch a ſurprize as may conſiſt with the weakneſſe, and judgement of a good man: but whatſoever is, or muſt be conſidered, if it cannot paſſe without conſideration, it cannot paſſe without ſin; and therefore cannot enter upon him, while he remains in that ſtate. For *he that is in Chriſt, in him the body is dead by reaſon of ſin*; and the Goſpel did not differ from the Law, but that the Goſpel gives grace and ſtrength to do whatſoever it commands, which the
 E Law did not; and the greatneſſe of the *promise of eternall life* is ſuch an argument to them that conſider it, that it muſt needs be of force ſufficient, to perſwade a man to uſe all his faculties, and all his ſtrength, that he may obtain it: God exacted all upon this ſtock; God knew this could do every thing: *Nihil non in hoc præ-*

SERM. II. *sumpsit Deus* (said one.) This will make a satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despise reputation, and Saul to turn from a Persecutor to an Apostle. For since God hath given us reason to choose, and a promise to exchange, for our temperance, and faith, and charity, and justice, for these (I say) happinelle, exceeding great happinelle; that we shall be Kings, that we shall reigne with God, with Christ, with all the holy Angels for ever, in felicities so great, that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us to do our duty. God hath not in heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger: which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of his we walk in his wayes, and be ingrafted into his stock, and bring forth his fruits, *the fruits of the Spirit*, then *we are in Christ*, and *Christ in us*, then *we walk in the spirit*, and *the Spirit dwells in us*, and our portion shall be there, where *Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us*, that is, at the right hand of his Father for ever, and ever. Amen.

Serm-



Sermon. III.

THE DESCENDING AND ENTAILED CURSE

Cut off.

Exodus 20. part of the 5. verse.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me :

6. And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my Commandements.



It is not necessary that a Common-wealth should give pensions to Oratours, to dissuade men from running into houses infected with the plague, or to intreat them to be out of love with violent torments, or to create in men evil opinions concerning famine, or painfull deaths: Every man hath a sufficient stock of self-love, upon the

strength of which he hath entertained principles strong enough to secure himself against voluntary mischiefs, and from running into states of death and violence. A man would think that this I have now said, were in all cases certainly true; and I would to God it were. For that which is the greatest evil, that which makes all

evils,

SERMON III.

evils, that which turns good into evil, and every naturall evil into a greater sorrow, and makes that sorrow lasting and perpetual; that which sharpens the edge of swords, and makes agues to be feavers, and feavers to turn into plagues; that which puts stings into every fly, and uneasinesse to every trifling accident, and strings every whip with Scorpions, (you know I must needs mean sin) that evil, men suffer patiently, and choose willingly, and run after it greedily, and will not suffer themselves to be divorced from it: and therefore God hath hired servants to fight against this evil; he hath set Angels with fiery swords to drive us from it, he hath employed Advocates to plead against it, he hath made Laws and Decrees against it, he hath dispatched Prophets to warn us of it, and hath established an Order of men, men of his own family, and who are fed at his own charges, (I mean the whole Order of the Clergy) whose office is like watchmen to give an alarm at every approach of sin, with as much affrightment as if an enemy were neer, or the sea broke in upon the flat Countrey; and all this, onely to perswade men not to be extremely miserable, for nothing, for vanity, for a trouble, for a disease: for some sins naturally are diseases, and all others are naturall nothings, meer privations, or imperfections, contrary to goodnesse, to felicity, to God himself: And yet God hath hedged sin round about with thorns, and sin of it self too brings thorns: and it abuses a man in all his capacities, and it places poison in all those seats and receptions where he could possibly entertain happiness. For if sin pretend to please the sense, it doth first abuse it shamefully, and then humours it: it can onely feed an impostume; no naturall, reasonable, and perfective appetite: and besides its own essentiall appendages, and proprieties; things are so ordered that a fire is kindled round about us; and every thing within us, above, below us, and on every side of us, is an argument against, and an enemy to sin; and for its single pretence, that it comes to please one of the senses, one of those faculties which are in us the same they are in a Cow, it hath an evill so communicative, that it doth not onely work like poison, to the dissolution of soul and body; but it is a sicknesse like the plague, it infects all our houses, and corrupts the air, and the very breath of heaven: for it moves God first to jealousy, (and that takes off his friendship and kindenesse towards us) and then to anger; and that makes him a resolved enemy; and it brings evil, not onely upon our selves, but upon all our relatives; upon our selves, and our children, even the children of our Nephews, *Ad natos natorum, & qui nascuntur ab illis*, to the third and fourth generation: and therefore if a man should despise the eye, or sword of man, if he sins, he is to contest with the jealousy of a provoked God: If he doth not regard himself, let him pity his pretty children: If he

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A be angry and hates all that he sees, and is not solicitous for his children, yet let him pitty the generations which are yet unborn; let him not bring a curse upon his whole family, and suffer his name to rot in curses and dishonours; let not his memory remain polluted with an eternal stain: if all this will not deter a man from sin, there is no instrument left for that mans vertue, no hopes of his felicity, no recovery of his sorrows and sicknesses; but he must sink under the stroaks of a jealous God into the dishonour of eternall ages, and the groanings of a never ceasing sorrow.

B *God is a jealous God*] that is the first great stroke, he strikes against sin, he speaks after the manner of men, and in so speaking we know; he that is *jealous* is *suspicious*, he is *inquisitive*, he is *implacable*. 1. God is pleased to represent himself a person very *suspicious*, both in respect of persons and things. For our persons we give him cause enough: for we are sinners from our Mothers womb; we make solemn vows and break them instantly; we cry for pardon and still renew the sin; we desire God to try us once more, and we provoke him ten times further: we use the means of grace to cure us, and we turn them into vices and opportunities of sin; we curse our sins, and yet long for them extremely; we renounce them publickly, and yet send for them in private and shew them kindenesse: we leave little offences, but our faith and our charity is not strong enough to Master great ones; and sometimes we are sham'd out of great ones, but yet entertain little ones; or if we disclaim both, yet we love to remember them, and delight in their past actions, and bring them home to us, at least by fiction of imagination; and we love to be betrayed into them; we would fain have things so ordered by chance or power, that it may seem necessary to sin, or that it may become excusable, and dressed fitly for our own circumstances: and for ever we

D long after the flesh pots of Egypt, the garlick and the Onions: and we so little do esteem Manna, the food of Angels, we so loath the bread of Heaven, that any temptation will make us return to our fetters and our bondage; and if we do not tempt our selves, yet we do not resist a temptation, or if we pray against it, we desire not to be heard; and if we be assisted, yet we will not work together with those assistances; so that unlesse we be forced, nothing will be done: we are so willing to perish, and so unwilling to be saved, that we minister to God reason enough to suspect us: and therefore it is no wonder that God is jealous of

E us: We keep company with Harlots and polluted persons: we are kind to all Gods Enemies, and love that which he hates: how can it be otherwise but that we should be suspected? Let us make our best of it, and see if we can recover the good opinion of God; for as yet we are but *suspected persons*. 2. And therefore God is

SERM. III.

inquisitive; he looks for that which he fain would never finde; God sets spies upon us; he looks upon us himself through the Curtains of a cloud; and he sends Angels to espie us in all our wayes, and permits the Devil to winnow us and to accuse us, and erects a Tribunal and witnesses in our own consciences, and he cannot want information concerning our smallest irregularities. Sometimes the Devil accuses, but he also sometimes accuses us falsely, either maliciously, or ignorantly and we stand upright in that particular by innocence; and sometimes by penitence, and all this while our Conscience, is our friend: Sometimes our conscience does accuse us unto God; and then we stand convict by our own judgement. Sometimes, if our conscience acquit us, yet *we are not thereby justified*: For, as *Moses* accused the Jews; so do Christ and his Apostles accuse us, not in their persons, but by their works, and by their words, by the thing it self, by confronting the laws of Christ, and our practises. Sometimes the Angels who are the observers of all our works carry up sad tydings to the Court of Heaven against us. Thus two Angels were the informers against Sodom; but yet these were the last; for before that time the cry of their iniquity had sounded loud and sadly in Heaven; and all this is the direct and proper effect of his jealousy; which sets spies upon all the actions, and watches the circumstances, and tells the steps, and attends the businesses, the recreations, the publications, and retirements of every man, and will not suffer a thought to wander, but he uses means to correct it's error, and to reduce it to himself. For he that created us and daily feeds us, he that intreats us to be happy, with an opportunity so passionate, as if (not we, but) himself were to receive the favour; he that would part with his onely Son from his bosome, and the embraces of eternity, and give him over to a shameful and cursed death for us, cannot but be supposed to love us with a great love, and to own us with an intire title, and therefore that he would fain secure us to himself with an undivided possession: and it cannot but be infinitely reasonable: for to whom else should any of us belong, but to God? Did the world create us? Or did lust ever do us any good: Did Sathan ever suffer one stripe for our advantage? Does not he study all the wayes to ruine us? Doe the Sun or the stars preserve us alive? Or do we get understanding from the Angels? Did ever any joynt of our body knit, or our heart ever keep one true minute of a pulse without God? Had not we been either nothing, or worse, that is, infinitely, eternally miserable, but that God made us capable, and then pursued us with arts and devices of great mercy to force us to be happy? Great reason therefore there is, that God should be jealous, lest we take any of our duty from him, who hath so strangely deserved it all,

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- A all, and give it to a creature, or to our enemy, who cannot be capable of any. But how ever, it will concern us with much caution to observe our own wayes. *since we are made a spectacle to God, to Angels, and to Men*: God hath set so many spies upon us, the blessed Angels and the cursed Devils, good men and bad men, the eye of Heaven, and eye of that eye, God himself, all watching lest we rob God of his Honour, and our selves of our hopes; For by his prime intention he hath chosen so to get his own glory, as may best consist with our felicity: His great designe is to be glorified in our being saved. 3. Gods jealousy hath a sadder effect then all this.
- B For all this is for mercy; but if we provoke this jealousy, if he findes us in our spiritual whoredoms, he is *implacable*, that is, he is angry with us to eternity, unlesse we return in time: and if we do, it may be he will not be appeased in all instances: and when he forgives us, he will make some reserves of his wrath; he will punish our persons, or our estate; he will chastise us at home, or abroad, in our bodies, or in our children; for he will visit our sins upon our children from generation to generation: and if they be made miserable for our sins, they are unhappy in such parents; but we bear the curse and the anger of God, even while they bear his rod: *God visits the sins of the Fathers upon the children*] That's the second Great stroke he strikes against sin, and is now to be considered.
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That God doth so is certain; because he saith he doth: and that this is just in him so to do, is also as certain, therefore because he doth it. For as his lawes are our measures, so his actions, and his own will are his own measures. He that hath right over all things, and all persons, cannot do wrong to any thing. He that is essentially just, (and there could be no such thing as justice, or justice it self could not be good, if it did not derive from him) it is impossible for him to be unjust. But since God is pleased to speak after the manner of men, it may wel consist with our duty to enquire into those manners of consideration, whereby we may understand the equity of God in this proceeding, and to be instructed also in our own danger, if we persevere in sin.

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I. No man is made a *sinner* by the fault of another man without his own consent. For to every one God gives his choice, and sets life and death before every of the sons of Adam: and therefore this death is not a consequent to any sin, but our own. In this sense it is true, *that if the fathers eat sowre grapes, the childrens teeth shall not be set on edge*: and therefore the sin of Adam which was derived to all the world; did not bring the world to any other death but temporall, by the intermediall stages of sickness, and temporal infelicities: And it is not said that *sin passed upon all men*, but *death*, and that also no otherwise but *ἐφ' ὅσοντες ἡμάρτον*, in as much as all men have sinned; as they have followed the steps of their father, so they are partakers of this death, And therefore it is very

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remark.

SERM. III. remarkable; that death brought in by sin, was nothing *superinduced* to man; man onely was *reduced* to his own naturall condition, from which before Adams fall he stood exempted by supernaturall favour; and therefore although the taking away that extraordinary grace, or priviledge was a punishment; yet the suffering the naturall death, was directly none; but a condition of his creation, naturall; and therefore not primarily evil; but if not good, yet at least indifferent. And the truth and purpose of this observation will extend it self, if we observe, that before any man died, Christ was promised, by whom death was to lose its sting, by whom death did cease to be an evil, and was, or might be, if we do belong to Christ, a state of advantage. So that we by occasion of Adams sin, being returned to our naturall certainty of dying, do still even in this very particular stand between the blessing and the cursing. If we follow Christ, death is our friend; If we imitate the prævarication of Adam, then death becomes an evil: the condition of our nature, becomes the punishment of *our own sin*, not of Adams: for although his sin brought death in, yet it is onely our sin that makes death to be evil: And I desire this to be observed, because it is of great use in vindicating the Divine justice in the matter of this question. The materiall part of the evil came from our father upon us, but the formality of it, the sting and the curse is onely by our selves.

2. For the fault of others, many may become *miserable*, even all or any of those, whose relation is such to the sinner, that he in any sense may by such afflictions be punished, execrable, or oppressed. Indeed it were strange, if when a plague were in Ethiopia, the Athenians should be infected: or if the house of Pericles were visited, and Thucydides should die for it. For although there are some evils which (as Plutarch saith) are *anis & propagationibus prædita incredibili celeritate in longinquum penetrantia*, such which can dart evil influences, as Porcupines do their quills; yet as at so great distances the knowledge of any confederate events must needs be uncertain: so it is also uselesse, because we neither can joyne their causes, nor their circumstances, nor their accidents into any neighbourhood of conjunction: Relations are seldome noted at such distances; and if they were, it is certain, so many accidents will intervene, that will out-weigh the efficacy of such relations; that by any so far distant events, we cannot be instructed in any duty, nor understand our selves reprov'd for any fault. But when the relation is neerer and is joyned under such a head, and common cause, that the influence is perceived, and the parts of it do usually communicate in benefit, notices, or infelicity (especially if they relate to each other, as superiour and inferiour) then it is certain, the sin is infectious (I mean) not onely in example, but also in punishment.

And

A And of this I shall shew. 1. In what instances usually it is so. 2. For what reasons it is so, and justly so. 3. In what degree, and in what cases it is so. 4. What remedies there are for this evil.

1. It is so in kingdoms, in Churches, in families, in politicall, artificiall, and even in accidentall societies.

B When David numbred the people, God was angry with him; but he punished the people for the crime; seventy thousand men died of the plague: and when God gave to David the choice of three plagues, he chose that of the pestilence, in which the meanest of the people, and such which have the least society with the acts and crimes of Kings are most commonly devoured, whilest the powerfull and sinning persons by arts of physick, and flight, by provisions of nature, and accidents are more commonly secured.

* But the story of the Kings of Israel hath furnished us with an example fitted with all the stranger circumstances in this question. Joshuah had sworn to the Gibeonites (who had craftily secured their lives, by exchanging it for their liberties:) Almost 500. years after, Saul in zeal to the men of Israel and Judah slew many of them. After this Saul dies, and no question was made of it.

C But in the dayes of David there was a famine in the land three years together; and God being inquired of, said it was because of Saul his killing the Gibeonites. What had the people to do with their Kings fault? or at least, the people of David with the fault of Saul? That we shall see anon: But see the way that was appointed to expiate the crime, and the calamity. David took seven of Sauls sons and hanged them up against the Sun, and after that God was intreated for the land. The story observes one circumstance more: that for the kindnesse of Jonathan, David spared Mephibosheth. Now this story doth not onely instance in Kingdoms, but in families too. The fathers fault is punished upon the sons of the family; and the Kings fault upon the people of his land, even after the death of the King, after the death of the father. Thus God visited the sin of Ahab, partly upon himself, partly upon his sons. *I will not bring the evil in his dayes, but in his sons dayes will I bring the evil upon his house.* Thus did God slay the childe of Bathsheba for the sin of his father David: and the whole family of Eli, all his kinred of the neerer lines were thrust from the priesthood, and a curse made to descend upon his children for many ages, *that all the males should die young, and in the flower of their youth.* The boldnesse and impiety of Cham made his posterity to be accursed, and brought slavery into the world. Because Amalek fought with the sons of Israel at Rephidim, God took up a quarrel against the nation for ever. And above all examples is that of the Jews, who put to death the Lord of life, and made their nation to be an anathema for ever, untill the day

2 Sam. 21. 14.

1 King. 21. 29.

of

SERM. III. of restitution. *His blood be upon us, and upon our children.* If we shed innocent blood, If we provoke God to wrath, If we oppress the poor, *If we crucifie the Lord of life again and put him to an open shame,* the wrath of God will be upon us and upon our children, to make us a cursed family, and who are the sinners, to be the stock and original of the curse; the pedigree of the misery shall derive from us.

This last instance went further then the other of families and kingdoms. For not only the single families of the Jews were made miserable for their Fathers murdering the Lord of life, nor also was the Nation extinguished alone for the sins of their Rulers, but the religion was removed; it ceased to be Gods people; the synagogues were rejected, and her vail rent, and her privacies dismantled, and the Gentiles were made to be Gods people when the Jews inclosure was disparted. I need not further to instance this proposition in the case of National Churches; though it is a sad calamity that is fallen upon all the seven Churches of Asia (to whom the spirit of God wrote seven Epistles by Saint John) and almost all the Churches of Africa, where Christ was worshipped, and now Mahomet is thrust in substitution, and the people are servants, and the religion is extinguished, or where it remains, it shines like the Moon in an Eclipse, or like the least spark of the Pleiades, seen but seldom, And that rather shining like a glowworm, then a taper enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness. I shall adde no more instances to verifie the truth of this, save only I shall observe to you, that even there is danger in being in evil company, in suspected places, in the civil societies and fellowships of wicked men,

Hor. l. 3. od. 3.

— *Vetabo qui Cereris sacrum
vulgarit arcana, sub iisdem
sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
solvat phaselum, saepe Diespiter
Neglectus, in cesto addidit integrum*

And it hapned to the Mariners who carried *Jonah*, to be in danger with a horrid storme, because *Jonah* was there who had sinned against the Lord. Many times the sin of one man is punished by the falling of a house or a wall upon him, and then all the family are like to be crushed with the same ruine; so dangerous, so pestilential, so infectious a thing is sin; that it scatters the poison of its breath to all the neighbourhood, and makes that the man ought to be avoided like a person infected with the plague.

Next I am to consider why this is so, and why it is justly so? To this I answer. 1. Between Kings and their people, Parents and their children there is so great a necessitude, propriety and intercourse of nature, dominion, right and possession, that they are by God and

A and the laws of Nations reckoned as their Goods, and their blessings. *The honour of a King is in the multitude of his people; and children are a gift that cometh of the Lord; and happy is that man that hath his quiver full of them: and Lo thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord; his wife shall be like the fruitful vine by the wals of his house, his children like olive branches round about his Table.* Now if children be a blessing, then to take them away in anger is a curse: and if the losse of flocks and herds, the burning of houses, the blasting of fields be a curse; how much greater is it to lose our children, and to see God slay them before our eyes, in hatred to our persons, and detestation and loathing of our baseness. When *Jobs* Messengers told him the sad stories of fire from Heaven, the burning his sheep, and that the Sabeans had driven his Oxen away, and the Chaldeans had stolne his Camels; these were sad arrests to his troubled spirit: but it was reserved as the last blow of that sad execution that the ruines of a house had crush'd his Sons and Daughters to their graves. Sons and Daughters are greater blessings then sheep and Oxen: they are not servants of profit as sheep are, but they secure greater ends of blessing; they preserve your Names; they are so many titles of provision and providence; every new childe is a new title of Gods care of that family: They serve the ends of honour, of commonwealths, and Kingdoms; they are images of our souls, and images of God, and therefore are great blessings; and by consequence, they are great riches, though they are not to be sold for mony: and surely he that hath a cabinet of invaluable jewels will think himself rich though he never sels them. *Does God take care for Oxen?* (said our blessed Saviour) much more for you: yea all and every one of your children are of more value then many Oxen: when therefore God for your sins strikes them with crookednesse, with deformity, with foolishnesse, with impertinent and caytive spirits, with hasty or sudden deaths, it is a greater curse to us, then to lose whole herds of cattel, of which (it is certain) most men would be very sensible. They are our goods; they are our blessings from God; therefore we are stricken, when for our sakes they dye: Therefore we may properly be punished by evils happening to our Relatives.

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2. But as this is a punishment to us, so it is not unjust as to them, though they be innocent. For all the calamities of this life are incident to the most Godly persons in the world; and since the King of Heaven and earth was made a man of sorrows, it cannot be called unjust or intolerable that innocent persons should be pressed with temporal infelicities: only in such cases we must distinguish the misery from the punishment; for that all the world dyes is a punishment of *Adams* sin: but it is no evil to those single persons that die in the Lord; for they are blessed in their death. *Jonathan* was killed the same day with his Father the King; and this was a punishment

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SERM. III. ment to *Saul* indeed; but to *Jonathan* it was a blessing: for, since A
 God had appointed the kingdom to his neighbour, it was more honourable for him to die fighting the Lords battel, then to live and see himself the lasting testimony of Gods curse upon his Father; who lost the Kingdome from his family by his disobedience. That death is a blessing which ends an Honorable, and prevents an inglorious life. And our children (it may be) shall be sanctified by a sorrow, and purified by the fire of affliction, and they shall receive the blessing of it; but it is to their Fathers a curse, who shall wound their own hearts with sorrow, and cover their heads with a robe of shame, for bringing so great evil upon their house.

3. God hath many ends of providence to serve in this dispensation of his judgements. * 1. He expresses the highest indignation against sin; and makes his examples lasting, communicative, and of great effect; it is a little image of hell; and we shall the lesse wonder that God with the pains of eternity punishes the sins of time, when with our eyes we see him punish a transient action with a lasting judgement. * 2. It arrests the spirits of men, and surprises their loosenesses, and restrains their gaiety, when we observe that the judgements of God finde us out in all relations, and turn our comforts into sadnesse, and makes our families the scene of sorrows, and we can escape him no where; and by sin are made obnoxious not alone to personall judgements; but that we are made like the fountains of the dead sea, springs of the lake of Sodom; in stead of refreshing our families with blessings, we leave them brimstone and drought, and poison, and an evil name, and the wrath of God, and a treasure of wrath; and their Fathers sins for their portion and inheritance. * Naturalists say, that when the leading goats in the Greek Islands have taken an Eryngus or sea holly into their mouths, all the herd will stand still, till the herds-man comes and forces it out, as apprehending the evil that will come to them all, if any of them, especially their Principals, tast an unwholsome plant: and indeed it is of a general concernment, that the Master of a family, or the Prince of a people, from whom as from a fountain many issues do derive upon their Relatives: should be springs of health and sanctity and blessing. It is a great right and propriety that a King hath in his people, or a Father in his children, that even their sins can do these a mischief, not onely by a direct violence, but by the execution of Gods wrath: God hath made strange bands and vessels, or chanel of communication between them, when even the anger of God shal be conveyed by the conduites of such relations. That would be considered. It binds them neerer then our new doctrine will endure: but it also binds us to pray for them and for their Holinesse, and good Government, as earnestly as we would be deliver'd from death, or sickness, or poverty, or war, or the wrath of God in any instance.

3. This

A 3. This also will satisfie the fearfulness of such persons who think the evil prosperous, and *call the proud happy*. No man can be called happy till he be dead; nor then neither, if he lived vitiously: Look how God handles him in his children, in his family, in his grand-children; and as it tells that generation which sees the judgement, that God was all the while angry with him; so it supports the spirits of men in the intervall, and entertains them with the expectation of a certain hope; for if I do not live to see his sin punished, yet his posterity may finde themselves accursed, and feel their fathers sins in their own calamity; and the expectation, or belief of that, may relieve my oppression, and ease my sorrowes, while I know that God will bear my injury in a lasting record, and when I have forgot it, will bring it forth to judgement. The Athenians were highly pleased when they saw honours done to the posterity of Cimon [a good man, and a rare citizen, but murdered for being wise and vertuous] and when at the same time they saw a decree of banishment passe against the children of Lacharis, and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouthes, and with silence did admire the justice of the Power above.

C The sum of this is; That in sending evils upon the posterity of evil men, God serves many ends of providence, some of wisdom, some of mercy, some of justice, and contradicts none: For the evil of the innocent son is the fathers punishment upon the stock of his sin, and his relation; but the sad accident happens to the son upon the score of nature, and many ends of providence, and mercy. To which I adde, that if any, even the greatest temporall evil may fall upon a man [as blindenesse did upon the blinde man in the Gospel] when *neither he nor his parents have sinned*; much more may it do so, when his parents have, though he have not. For there is a nearer, or more visible commensuration of justice, between the parents sin, and the sons sickness, then between the evil of the son, and the innocence of father and son together. The dispensation therefore is righteous and severe.

E 3. I am now to consider in what degree, and in what cases, this is usuall, or to be expected. It is in the Text instanced in the matter of worshipping images. God is so jealous of his honour, that he will not suffer an image of himself to be made, lest the image dishonour the substance; nor any image of a creature to be worshipped, though with a lesse honour, lest that lesse swell up into a greater: and he that is thus jealous of his honour, and therefore so instances it, is also very curious of it in all other particulars; and though to punish the sins of fathers upon the children, be more solemnly threatned in this sin only, yet we finde it inflicted indifferently in any other great sin, as appears in the former precedents.

This one thing I desire to be strictly observed: That it is with

SERM. III.

much error, and great indiligence usually taught in this question, that the wrath of God descends from fathers to children onely in case the children imitate, and write after their fathers copy; supposing these words [of them that hate me] to relate to the children. But this is expressely against the words of the Text, and the examples of the thing: God afflicts good children of evil parents, for their fathers sins; and the words are plain and determinate: God visits the sins of the fathers *in tertiam & quartam generationem eorum qui oderunt me*; to the third generation of them, of those fathers that hate me: that is, upon the great-grand-children of such parents. So that if the great-grandfathers be haters of God, and lovers of iniquity, it may intail a curse upon so many generations, though the children be haters of their fathers hatred, and lovers of God. * And this hath been observed even by wise men among the Heathens, whose stories tell, that *Antigonus* was punished for the tyranny of his father *Demetrius*; *Phyleus* for his father *Augeas*; pious and wise *Nestor* for his father *Neleus*: And it was so in the case of *Jonathan*, who lost the Kingdom and his life upon the stock of his fathers sins; and the innocent childe of David was slain by the anger of God, not against the childe, who never had deserved it, but the fathers adultery. I need not here repeat what I said in vindication of the Divine justice; but I observed this, to represent the danger of a sinning father, or mother, when it shall so infect the family with curses, that it shall ruine a wife and an innocent son; and that vertue and innocence which shall by God be accepted as sufficient through the Divine mercy to bring the son to Heaven, yet it may be shall not be accepted to quit him from feeling the curse of his fathers crime, in a load of temporall infelicities: And who but a villain would ruine and undoe a wife, a vertuous, and his own son? But so it is in all the world. A traitor is condemned to suffer death himself, and his posterity are made beggars, and dishonourable, his Escutcheon is reversed, his arms of honour are extinguished, the noblenesse of his Ancestours is forgotten, but his own sin is not, while men by the characters of infamy are taught to call that family accursed, which had so base a father. *Tiresias* was esteemed unfortunate, because he could not see his friends and children: the poor man was blinde with age: But *Athamas* and *Agave* were more miserable, who did see their children, but took them for Lions, and Stags; The parents were miserable frantick: But of all, they deplored the misery of *Hercules*; who when he saw his children, took them for enemies, and endeavoured to destroy them. And this is the case of all vicious parents. That *a mans enemies were they of his own house*, was accounted a great calamity: but it is worse, when we love them tenderly, and fondly, and yet do them all the despite we wish to enemies; But so it is, that in many cases we do more mischief

A chief to our children, then if we should strangle them when they are newly taken from their mothers knees, or tear them in pieces as *Medea* did her brother *Absyrtus*; For to leave them to inherit a curse, to leave them an intail'd calamity, a misery, a disease, the wrath of God for an inheritance, that it may descend upon them, and remark the family like their coat of arms, is to be the parent of evil, the ruine of our family, the causes of mischief to them, who ought to be dearer to us then our own eyes. And let us remember this, when we are tempted to provoke the jealous God: let us consider, that his anger hath a progeny, and a descending line, and it may break out in the dayes of our Nephews. A Greek woman was accused of adultery, because she brought forth a Black-moor; and could not acquit her self, till she had proved that she had descended in the fourth degree from an Ethiopian: Her great Grand-father was a Moor. And if Naturalists say true, that Nephews are very often liker to their Grand-fathers then to their Fathers; we see that the semblance of our souls, and the character of the person, is conveyed by secret and undiscernable conveyances. Naturall production conveyes originall sin; and therefore, by the chanel of the body, it is not strange that men convey an hereditary sin: And lustfull sons are usually born to Satyrs; and monsters of intemperance to the drunkards; and there are also hereditary diseases: which if in the fathers they were effects of their sin, as it is in many cases, it is notorious that the fathers sin is punished, and the punishment conveyed by naturall instruments: so that it cannot be a wonder, but it ought to be a huge affrightment from a state of sin; If a man can be capable of so much charity, as to love himself in his own person, or in the images of his nature, and heirs of his fortunes, and the supports of his family, in the children that God hath given him. Consider therefore that you do not only act your own tragedies when you sin, but you represent and effect the fortune of your children; you slay them with your own barbarous and inhumane hands. Onely be pleased to compare the variety of estates, of your own, and your children. If they on earth be miserable many times for their fathers sins, how great a state of misery is that in hell which they suffer for their own? And how vile a person is that father, or mother, who for a little money, or to please a lust, will be a parricide, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children?

The Intail of Curses cut off.

Part II.

B

4. **I** Am to consider what remedies there are for sons to cut off this intail of curses; and whether, and by what means it is possible for sons to prevent the being punished for their fathers sins? And since this thing is so perplex and intricate, hath so easie an objection, and so hard an answer, looks so like a cruelty, and so unlike a justice, (though it be infinitely just, and very severe, and a huge enemy to sin) it cannot be thought but that there are not only wayes left to reconcile Gods proceeding to the strict rules of justice, but also the condition of man to the possibilities of Gods usuall mercies. One said of old, *Ex tarditate si Dij fontes prætereant, & insontes plectant, justitiam suam non sic rectè resarciunt.* If God be so slow to punish the guilty, that the punishment be deferred till the death of the guilty person; and that God shall be forced to punish the innocent, or to let the sin quite escape unpunished, it will be something hard to joyn that justice with mercy, or to joyn that action with justice. Indeed it will seem strange, but the reason of its justice I have already discoursed: If now we can finde how to reconcile this to Gods mercy too, or can learn how it may be turned into a mercy, we need to take no other care, but that for our own particular we take heed we never tempt Gods anger upon our families, and that by competent and apt instruments, we indeavour to cancell the decree, if it be gone out against our families; for then we make use of that severity which God intended; and our selves shall be refreshed in the shades, and by the cooling brooks of the Divine mercy; even then when we see the wrath of God breaking out upon the families round about us.

C

D

1. The first means to cut off the intail of wrath and cursings from a family, is, for the sons to disavow those signal actions of impiety, in which their fathers were deeply guilty, and by which they stained great parts of their life, or have done something of very great unworthinesse and disreputation. *Si quis paterni vitij nascitur hæres, nascitur & pœna:* The heir of his fathers wickednesse, is the heir of his fathers curse: and a son comes to inherit a wicked-

E

A wickednesse from his father three wayes. 1. By approving, or any wayes consenting to his fathers sin: As by speaking of it without regret, or shame; by pleasing himself in the story; or by having an evil minde, apt to counsel or do the like, if the same circumstances should occur. For a son may contract a sin, not onely by derivation, and the contagion of example, but by approbation; not only by a corporall, but by a virtuall contact; not only by transcribing an evil copy, but by commending it: and a man may have *animum leprosum in cute mundi*, a leprous and a polluted minde even for nothing, even for an empty and ineffective lust. An evil minde may contract the curse of an evil action; and though the son of a covetous father prove a prodigall, yet if he loves his fathers vice for ministring to his vanity, he is disposed not onely to a judgement for his own prodigality, but also to the curse of his fathers avarice.

B 2. The son may inherit his fathers wickednesse by imitation and direct practise, and then the curse is like to come to purpose; a curse by accumulation, a treasure of wrath: and then the children as they arrive to the height of wickednesse by a speedy passage, as being thrust forward by an active example, by countenance, by education, by a seldome restraint, by a remisse discipline; so they ascertain a curse to the family, by being a perverse generation, a family set up in opposition against God, by continuing and increasing the provocation.

C 3. Sons inherit their fathers crimes, by receiving and enjoying the purchases of their rapine, injustice, and oppression, by rising upon the ruine of their fathers souls, by sitting warme in the furies which their father stole, and walking in the grounds which are water'd with the tears of oppressed orphans, and widows. Now in all these cases the rule holds. *If the son inherits the sin, he cannot call it unjust, if he inherits also his fathers punishment.* D But to rescind the fatall chain, and break in sunder the line of Gods anger, a son is tied in all these cases to disavow his fathers crime. But because the cases are severall, he must also in severall manners do it.

E 1. Every man is bound not to glory in, or speak honour of the powerfull and unjust actions of his Ancestors: But as all the sons of Adam are bound to be ashamed of that originall stain which they derived from the loins of their abused Father, they must be humbled in it, they must deplore it as an evil Mother, and a troublesome daughter: so must children account it amongst the crosses of their family, and the stains of their honour, that they passed thorow so impure chanel, that in the sense of morality as well as nature, they can say to corruption, *thou art my father*, and to rottennesse, *thou art my mother*. I do not say that sons are bound to publish, or declaim against their fathers crimes, and

SERM. IV.

to speak of their shame in *Piazza's* and before *Tribunals*; that indeed were a sure way to bring their fathers sins upon their own heads, by their own faults. No: Like Sem, and Japhet they must go backward, and cast a vail upon their nakedness and shame, lest they bring the curse of their fathers angry dishonour upon their own impious and unrelenting heads. Noahs drunkenness fell upon Chams head, because he did not hide the openness of his fathers follies: he made his father ridiculous; but did not endeavour either to amend the sin; or to wrap the dishonour in a pious covering. He that goes to disavow his fathers sin by publishing his shame, hides an ill face with a more ugly vizard, and endeavours by torches and phantastick lights, to quench the burning of that house which his father set on fire: These fires are to be smothered and so extinguished. I deny not but it may become the piety of a child to tell a sad story, to mourn, and represent a real grief for so great a misery, as is a wicked father or mother; but this is to be done with a tenderness, as nice as we would dresse an eye withall; it must be only with designs of charity, of counsel, of ease, and with much prudence, and a sad spirit: These things being secured, that which in this case remains is, that with all intercourses between God and our selves, we disavow the crime.

Children are bound to pray to God, to sanctifie, to cure, to forgive their parents: and even concerning the sins of our forefathers, the Church hath taught us in her Letanies, to pray that God would be pleased to forgive them, so that neither we, nor they may sink under the wrath of God for them. [*Remember not Lord our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins: Ours*] in common and conjunction: And David confessed to God, and humbled himself for the sins of his Ancestors and Decessors: *Our fathers have done amisse, and dealt wickedly, neither kept they thy great goodnesse in remembrance, but were disobedient at the sea, even at the red sea.* So did good King Josiah, *Great is the wrath of the Lord which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book.* But this is to be done between God and our selves: or if in publike, then to be done by generall accusation; that God onely may read our particular sorrows in the single shame of our families registred in our hearts, and represented to him with humiliation, shame, and a hearty prayer.

2. Those curses which descend from the Fathers to the children by imitation of the crimes of their progenitors, are to be cut off by special and personal repentance, and prayer, as being a state directly opposite to that which procured the curse: And if the sons be pious, or return to an early and a severe course of Holy living, they are to be remedied as other innocent and pious persons are, who

2 King. 32. 13

A are sufferers under the burdens of their Relatives, whom I shal consider by and by. Only observe this; that no publick or imaginative disavowings, no ceremonial and pompous rescission of our Fathers crimes can be sufficient to interrupt the succession of the curse, if the children do secretly practise or approve what they in pretence or ceremony disavow: and this is clearly proved (and it will help to explicate that difficult saying of our B. Saviour,) *We unto you, for ye build the sepulchres of the Prophets, and your Fathers killed them: truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they killed them, and ye build their sepulchres:* that is, the Pharisees were huge hypocrites, and adorned the monuments of the Martyr Prophets, and in words disclaim'd their Fathers sin, but in deeds and designe they approved it. 1. Because they secretly wish'd all such persons dead; *colebant mortuos quos nolent Superstitēs:* In charity to themselves some men wish their enemies in Heaven, and would be at charges for a monument for them, that their malice, and their power and their bones might rest in the same grave: and yet that wish, and that expence is no testimony of their Charity, but of their anger. 2. These men were willing that the monuments of those Prophets should remain, and be a visible affrightment to all such bold persons and severe reproachers as they were; and therefore they builded their Sepulchres to be as beacons, and publications of danger to all Honest Preachers. And this was the account Saint Chrysostome gave of the place. 3. To which also the circumstances of the place concur. For *they only said,* if they had lived in their Fathers dayes they would not have done as they did; but it is certain they approved it, because they pursued the same courses: and therefore our blessed Saviour calls them *γενεὰν σκοτίνουσαν*, Not onely the children of them that did kill the Prophets, but a *Killing generation*; the sin also descends upon you, for ye have the same killing minde; and although you honour them that are dead, and cannot shame you; yet you designe the same usages against them that are alive, even against the Lord of the Prophets, against Christ himself, whom ye will kill: and as *Dion* said of *Caracalla* πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνέστην ἀχθόμενος πᾶν τινὰς αὐτῶν δοῦναι τιμὴν ἐπλάττετο The man was troublesome to all good men when they were alive, but did them honour when they were dead: And when *Herod* had killed *Aristobulus*, yet he made him a most magnificent funeral; and because the Pharisees were of the same humor, therefore our blessed Saviour bids them to *fill up the measure of their Fathers iniquity*; for they still continued the malice, only they painted it over with a pretence of piety, and of disavowing their Fathers sin; which if they had done really, they being children of persecutors, & much lesse could the *adorning of the Prophets sepulchres* have been just cause of a wo from Christ; this being an act of piety, and the other of nature, inevitable, and not chosen by them; and therefore not chargeable upon them. He therefore that will

SERM. IV. will to reall purposes disavow his fathers crimes; must do it heartily and humbly and charitably, and throw off all affections to the like actions. For he that finds fault with his Father for killing *Ishaiab*, or *Jeremy*, and himself shall kill *Arissobulus* and *John* the Baptist; he that is angry because the old Prophets were murdered, and shall imprison, and begger and destroy the new ones; He that disavows the persecution in the primitive times, and honours the memory of the dead Martyrs, and yet every day makes new ones: He that blames the oppression of the Country by any of his predecessors, and yet shall continue to oppress his Tenants, and all that are within his gripe, that man cannot hope to be eased from the curse of his Fathers sins: He goes on to imitate them, and therefore to fill up their measure, and to reap a full treasure of wrath.

3. But concerning the third: there is yet more difficulty. Those sons that inherit their Fathers sins by possessing the price of their Fathers souls, that is, by enjoying the goods gotten by their Fathers rapine, may certainly quit the inheritance of the curse, if they quit the purchase of the sin, that is, if they pay their Fathers debts; his debts of contract, and his debts of justice: his debts of entercourse, and his debts of oppression. I do not say that every man is bound to restore all the land which his Ancestors have unjustly snatched: for when by law the possession is established, though the Grandfather entred like a thief, yet the Grand-child is *bona fidei possessor*, and may enjoy it justly: and the reasons of this are great, and necessary: for the avoiding eternal suites, and perpetuall diseases of rest and conscience: because there is no estate in the world that could be enjoyed by any man honestly, if posterity were bound to make restitution of all the wrongs done by their progenitors. But although the children of the far removed lines are not obliged to restitution, yet others are: and some for the same, some for other reasons.

1. Sons are tied to restore what their Fathers did usurpe, or to make agreement, and an acceptable recompence for it, if the case be visible, evident and notorious, and the oppressed party demands it; because in this case the law hath not settled the possession in the new tenant: or if a judge hath, it is by injury; and there is yet no collateral accidental title transferred by long possession, as it is in other cases: and therefore if the son continues to oppress the same person, whom his Father first injured, he may well expect to be the heir of his Fathers curse, as well as of his cursed purchase.

2. Whether by law and justice, or not, the person be obliged, nay, although by all the solemnities of law the unjust purchase be established, and that in conscience the Grand-children be not obliged to restitution in their own particulars, but may continue to enjoy it without a new sin; yet if we see a curse descending upon the family for

- A for the old oppression done in the dayes of our Grandfathers; or if we probably suspect that to be the cause; then if we make restitution, we also most certainly remove the curse: because we take away the matter upon which the curse is grounded: I do not say, we sin, if we do not restore: but that, if we do not, we may still be punished: The reason of this is clear and visible. For as without our faults, in many cases we may enjoy those lands which our forefathers got unjustly: so without our faults we may be punished for them. For as they have transmitted the benefit to us, it is but reasonable we should suffer the appendant calamity. If we receive good, we must also venture the evil that comes along with it: *res transit cum suo onere*. All lands and possessions passe with their proper burdens. And if any of my Ancestors was a Tenant, and a servant, and held his lands as a Villane to his Lord, his posterity also must do so, though accidentally they become noble. The case is the same: If my Ancestors entred unjustly, there is a curse and a plague that is due to that oppression and injustice; and that is *the burden of the land*, and it descends all along with it: And although I by the consent of Laws am a just possessor, yet I am obliged to the burden that comes with the land: I am indeed another kinde
- C of person then my Grand-father; he was an usurper, but I am a just possessor; but because in respect of the land this was but an accidentall change, therefore I still am liable to the burden, and the curse that descends with it: but the way to take off the curse is to quit the title; and yet a man may choose. It may be to lose the land would be the bigger curse: but if it be not, the way is certain how you may be rid of it. There was a custome among the Greeks, that the children of them that dyed of consumptions or dropsies, all the while their Fathers bodies were burning in their funeral piles, did sit with their feet in cold water, hoping that such a lustration, and ceremony would take off the lineal and descending contagion from the children: I know not what cure they found by their superstition: but we may be sure, that if we wash (not our feet, but) our hands of all the unjust purchases which our Fathers have transmitted to us, their hydropick thirst of wealth shall not transmit to us a consumption of estate, or any other curse. But this remedy is only in the matter of injury, or oppression, not in the case of other sins: because other sins were transient: and as the guilt did not passe upon the children, so neither did the exteriour and permanent effect: and therefore in
- E other sins (in case they do derive a curse) it cannot be removed, as in the matter of unjust possession, it may be; whose effect (we may so order it) shall no more stick to us then the guilt of our fathers personal actions.

The summe is this. As Kingdoms use to expiate the faults of others by acts of justice: and as Churches use to remove the accursed thing from sticking to the communities of the faithful, and the
sins

SERM. IV. sins of Christians from being required of the whole Congregation; by excommunicating and censuring the delinquent persons: so the Heirs and sons of families, are to remove from their house the curse descending from their fathers loins, by 1. Acts of disavowing the sins of their Ancestors. 2. By praying for pardon. 3. By being humbled for them. 4. By renouncing the example; and 5. Quitting the affection to the crimes. 6. By not imitating the actions in Kinde, or in semblance and similitude; and lastly, 7. By refusing to rejoyce in the ungodly purchases in which their Fathers did amisse and dealt wickedly.

Secondly. But after all this, many cases do occur, in which we finde that innocent sons are punished: The remedies I have already discoursed of, are for such children, who have in some manner or other contracted and derived the sin upon themselves. But if we inquire, how those sons who have no entercourse, or affinity with their fathers sins; or whose fathers sins were so transient, that no benefit or effect did passe upon their posterity, how they may prevent, or take off the curse that lyes upon the family, for their Fathers faults; this will have some distinct considerations.

- I. 1. The pious children of evil Parents are to stand firme upon the confidence of the Divine grace and mercy; and upon that persuasion to begin to work upon a new stock. For it is as certain, that he may derive a blessing upon his Posterity, as that his Parents could transmit a curse: and if any man by piety shall procure Gods favour to his Relatives and children, it is certain that he hath done more, then to escape the punishment of his Fathers follies. If *sin doth abound*, and evils by sin are derived from his Parents, *much more shall grace superabound*, and mercy by grace. If he was in danger from the crimes of others, much rather shall he be secured by his own piety: For if God punishes the sins of the fathers to four generations, yet he rewards the piety of fathers to ten, to hundreds, and to thousands. Many of the Ancestors of *Abraham* were persons not noted for religion; but suffered in the publike impiety, and almost universal idolatry of their ages; and yet all the evils that could thence descend upon the family, were wiped off; and God began to reckon with *Abraham* upon a new stock of blessings and piety; and he was under God, the Original of so great a blessing, that his family for 1500. years together had from him a title to many favours; and what ever evils did chance to them in the descending ages, were but single evils, in respect of that treasure of mercies which the fathers piety had obtained to the whole nation. And it is remarkable to observe; how blessings did stick to them for their fathers sakes, even whether they would or no. For first, his Grand-childe *Eſau* proved a naughty man, and he lost the great blessing which was intailed upon the family; but he got, not a curse, but a lesse blessing: and yet because he lost the greater blessing, God excluded him from being reckoned in the elder time; for

- A for God foreseeing the event, so ordered it, that he should first lose his birth-right, and then lose the blessing; for it was to be certain, the family must be reckoned for prosperous in the proper line; and yet God blessed *Eſau* into a great nation, and made him the father of many Princes. Now the line of blessing being reckoned in *Jacob*, God blessed his family strangely, and by miracle, for almost five generations; he brought them from Egypt by mighty signes and wonders; and when for sin they all died in their way to Canaan, two onely excepted, God so ordered it, that they were all reckoned as single deaths, the Nation still descending like a river whose waters were drunk up for the beauvragage of an army, but still it keeps its name and current, and the waters are supplied by showers, and springs, and providence. After this, iniquity still increased, and then God struck deeper, and spread curses upon whole families: he translated the Priesthood from line to line, he removed the Kingdome from one family to another; & still they sinned worse and then we read that God smote almost a whole tribe, the tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished about the matter of the Levites Concubine: but still God remembered his promise which he made with their forefathers, & that breach was made up.
- B After this we finde a greater rupture made; and ten tribes fell into idolatry, and ten tribes were carried captives into Assyria, and never came again: But still God remembered his covenant with Abraham, and left two Tribes; but they were restlesse in their provocation of the God of Abraham; and they also were carried captive: But still God was the God of their fathers and brought them back, and placed them safe, and they grew again into a Kingdom and should have remained for ever, but that they killed one that was greater then Abraham, even the Meſſias; and then they were rooted out, and the old covenant cast off, and God delighted no more to be called the God of Abraham; but the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C As long as God kept that relation, so long for the fathers sakes they had a title and an inheritance to a blessing: for so saith Saint Paul [As touching the election they are beloved for the Fathers sakes.]
- D

Rom. 11. 28.

I did insist the longer upon this instance, that I might remonstrate how great and how sure, and how preserving mercies, a pious Father of a family may derive upon his succeeding generations: And if we do but tread in the footsteps of our Father Abraham, we shall inherit as certain blessings. But then I pray, adde these considerations.

- E 1. If a great impiety, and a clamorous wickednesse hath stained the honour of a family, and discomposed its title to the Divine mercies and protection, it is not an ordinary piety that can restore this family. An ordinary, even course of life, full of sweetnesse, and innocency will secure every single person in his own eternal interest

SERM. IV. interest: but that piety which must be a spring of blessings, and communicative to others, that must plead against the sins of their Ancestors, and begin a new bank of mercies for the Relatives; that, must be a great, and excellent, a very religious state of life. A small pension will maintain a single person: but he that hath a numerous family, and many to provide for, needs a greater providence of God, and a bigger provision for their maintenance: and a small revenue will not keep up the dignity of a great house; especially, if it be charged with a great debt: And this is the very state of the present question. That piety that must be instrumental to take off the curse imminent upon a family; to bless a numerous posterity, to secure a fair condition to many ages, and to pay the debts of their Fathers sins, must be so large, as that all necessary expences, and duties for his own soul being first discharged, it may be remarkable in great expressions, it may be exemplar to all the family, it may be of universal efficacy, large in the extension of parts, deep in the intention of degrees: and then, as the root of a tree receives nourishment, not onely sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastick juice to the trunk of the tree, and from thence to the utmost branch and smallest gem that knots in the most distant part: So shall the great and exemplar piety of the father of a family, not onely preserve to the interest of his own soul the life of grace, and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickning spirit, active and communicative of a blessing, not onely to the trunk of the tree, to the body and rightly descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that shall claim a kindred, shall have a title to a blessing. And this was the way that was prescribed to the family of *Eliz*, upon whom a sad curse was intailed that there should not be an old man of the family for ever, and that they should be beggers, and lose the office of Priesthood: by the counsel of R. *Johanan* the son of *Zabebai* all the family betook themselves to a great, a strict and a severe religion; and God was intreated to revoke his decree, to be reconciled to the family, to restore them to the common condition of men, from whence they stood separate by the displeasure of God against the crime of *Eliz*, and his Sons *Hophni* and *Phinehas*. This course is sure either to take off the judgement, or to change it into a blessing; to take away the rod, or the smart and evil of it; to convert the punishment into a meer naturall, or humane chance, and that chance to the opportunity of a vertue, and that vertue to the occasion of a crown.

2. It is of great use for the securing of families, that every Master of a family order his life so, that his piety and vertue be as communicative as is possible; that is, that he secure the religion of his whole family, by a severe supervision and animadversion, and by cutting off all those unprofitable and hurtful branches which

A which lead the tree and hinder the growth, and stock & disimprove the fruit, & revert evil juice to the very root it self. Calvisius Sabinus laid out vast sums of money upon his servants to stock his house with learned men; and brought one that could recite all Homer by heart, a second that was ready at Hesiod; a third at Pindar; and for every of the Lyricks one: having this fancy, that all that learning was his own, and whatsoever his servants knew, made him so much the more skillful. It was noted in the man for a rich and a prodigal folly: but if he had chang'd his instance, & brought none but vertuous servants in to his house, he might better have reckoned his wealth upon their stock, & the piety of his family might have helped to blesse him, and to have increased the treasure of the Masters vertue. Every man that would either cut off the title of an old curse, or secure a blessing upon a new stock, must make vertue as large in the fountain as he can, that it may the sooner water all his Relatives with fruitfulness and blessings. And this was one of the things that God noted in Abraham, and blessed his family for it, and his posterity; *I know that Abraham will teach his sons to fear me.* When a man teaches his family to know and fear God, then he scatters a blessing round about his habitation. And this helps to illustrate the reason of the thing as well as to prove its certainty. We hear it spoken in our books of Religion, that the faith of the parents is imputed to their children to good purposes, & that a good husband sanctifies an ill wife, & *a believing wife, an unbelieving husband*; and either of them makes the children to be sanctified, *else they were unclean, and unholy*; that is, the very designing children to the service of God is a sanctification of them; and therefore S. Hierom calls Christian children *Candidatos fidei Christiana*: and if this very designation of them makes them holy; that is, acceptable to God, intitled to the promises, partakers of the Covenant, within the condition of sons; much more shall it be effectual to greater blessings when the Parents take care that the children shall be actually pious, full of sobriety, full of religion, then it becomes a holy house, *a chosen generation, an elect family*; and then there can no evil happen to them, but such which will bring them neerer to God; that is, no crosse, but the crosse of Christ; no misfortune, but that which shall lead them to felicity: and if any semblance of a curse happens in the generations, it is but like the anathema of a sacrifice; not an *accursed*, but a *devoted* thing: for so the sacrifice upon whose neck the Priests knife doth fall, is so far from being accursed, that it helps to get a blessing to all that joyn in the oblation: so every misfortune that shall discompose the ease of a pious and religious family shall but make them fit to be presented unto God; and the rod of God shall be like the branches of fig-trees, bitter and sharp in themselves, but productive of most delicious fruit: no evil can curse the family whose stock is pious, and *whose branches are Holiness unto the Lord.* If any leaf, or any boughs shall fall untimely, God shall gather it up, and

place

SERM. IV.

place it in his Temple, or at the foot of his throne; and that family must needs be blessed, whom infelicity it self cannot make accursed.

3. If a curse be feared to descend upon a family for the fault of their Ancestors; pious sons have yet another way to secure themselves, & to withdraw the curse from the family, or themselves from the curse; and that is, by doing some very great and illustrious act of piety, an action *in gradu heroico* (as Aristotle calls it) an heroicall action. If there should happen to be one Martyr in a family, it would reconcile the whole kinred to God, & make him who is more inclined to mercy then to severity, rather to be pleased with the Relatives of the Martyr, then continue to be angry with the Nephews of a deceased sinner. I cannot insist long upon this: But you may see it proved by one great instance in the case of Phinehas, who killed an unclean Prince, & turned the wrath of God from his people: he was zealous for God and for his countrey men, & did an heroicall action of zeal: Wherefore (saith God) *Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.* Thus the sons of Rechab obtain'd the blessing of an enduring and blessed family, because they were most strict & religious observers of their fathers precepts, and kept it after his death, and abstained from wine for ever; and no temptation could invite them to taste it; for they had as great reverence to their fathers ashes, as being children they had to his rod, & to his eyes. Thus a man may turn the wrath of God from his family, & secure a blessing for posterity, by doing some great noble acts of charity, or a remarkable chastity, like that of Joseph; or an expensive, an effectionate religion and love to Christ and his servants (as Mary Magdalene did.) Such things as these which are extraordinary egressions and transvolations beyond the ordinary course of an even piety. God loves to reward with an extraordinary favour; and gives it testimony by an extraregular blessing.

One thing more I have to adde by way of advice; and that is, that all parents and fathers of families, from whose loyns a blessing or a curse usually does descend, be very carefull, not onely generally in all the actions of their lives (for that I have already pressed) but, particularly in the matter of repentance; that they be curious that they finish it, & do it thorowly: for there are certain *ὑπερῆματα μετάνοιαι*, leavings of repentance, which makes that Gods anger is taken from us so imperfectly: and although God for his sake who died for us, will pardon a returning sinner, and bring him to heaven through tribulation & a fiery tryall; yet when a man is weary of his sorrow, and his fastings are a load to him, & his sins are not so perfectly renounced, or hated as they ought, the parts of repentance which are left unfinished do sometimes fall upon the heads, or upon the fortunes of the children. I do not say, this is regular and certain, but some-

times

Num. 25. 12.

A times God deals thus. For this thing hath been so, and therefore it may be so again: we see it was done in the case of *Ahab*; he humbled himself and went softly, and lay in sackcloth, and called for pardon, and God took from him a judgement which was falling heavily upon him: but we all know his repentance was imperfect and lame: The same evil fell upon his sons; for so said God; I will bring the evil upon his house in his sons dayes. Leave no arrears for thy posterity to pay; but repent with an integral, a holy and excellent repentance, that God being reconciled to thee thoroughly, for thy sake also he may blesse thy seed after thee.

B And after all this, adde a continual, a fervent, a hearty, a never ceasing prayer for thy children, ever remembring when they beg a blessing, that God hath put much of their fortune into your hands; and a transient formal [*God blesse thee*] will not out-weigh the load of a great vice; and the curse that scatters from thee by virtual contact, and by the channels of relation, if thou beest a vicious person: Nothing can issue from thy fountain but bitter waters. And as it were a great impudence for a condemned Traitor to beg of his injured Prince a province for his son; for his sake: so it is an ineffective blessing we give our children, when we beg for them, what we have no title to for our selves. Nay, when we can convey to them nothing but a

C curse. The prayer of a sinner, the unhallowed wish of a vicious Parent is but a poor donative to give to a childe who suck'd poison from his nurse, and derives cursing from his Parents. They are punished with a double torture in the shame and paines of the damned, who dying Enemies to God have left an inventory of sins and wrath to be divided amongst their children. But they that can truly give a blessing to their children, are such as live a blessed life, and pray holy prayers, and perform an integral repentance, and do separate from the sins of their Progenitors, and do illustrious actions, and begin the blessing of their family upon a new stock; for as from the eyes of

D some persons, there shoots forth an evil influence; and some have an evil eye, and are infectious; some look healthfully as a friendly planet, and innocent as flowers: and as some fancies convey private effects to confederate and allyed bodyes, and between the very vital spirits of friends and Relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants, and a good man is a friend to every good man; and (they say) that an usurer knows an usurer, and one rich man another, there being by the very manners of men contracted a similitude of nature, and a communication of effects: so in parents and their children there is so great a society of

E nature and of manners, of blessing and of cursing, that an evil parent cannot perish in a single death, and holy parents never eat their meal of blessing alone; but they make the roome shine like the fire of a holy sacrifice: and a Fathers or a Mothers piety makes all the house festivall, and full of joy from generation to generation. Amen.



Sermon. V.

THE

Invalidity of a late, or death-bed Repentance.

13. Jeremy. 16.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darknesse, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains: and while ye look for light, or, (left while ye look for light) he shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it grosse darknesse.



God is the eternall fountain of honour, and the spring of glory; in him it dwells essentially, from him it derives originally; and when an action is glorious, or a man is honourable, it is because the action is pleasing to God, in the relation of obedience or imitation, and because the man is honoured by God, or by Gods Vicegerent; and therefore God cannot be dishonoured, because all honour comes from himself; he cannot but be glorified, because to be himself is to be infinitely glorious. And yet he is pleased to say, that our sins dishonour him, and our obedience does glorifie him. But as the Sun, the great eye of the world, prying into the recesses of rocks, and the hollownesse of valleys, receives species, or visible forms from these objects, but he beholds them onely by that light which proceeds from himself: So does God who is the light of that eye; he receives reflexes and returns from us, and these he calls *glorifications*.

A cations of himself, but they are such which are made so by his own gracious acceptation. For God cannot be glorified by any thing but by himself, and by his own instruments, which he makes as mirrours to reflect his own excellency, that by seeing the glory of such emanations, he may rejoyce in his own works, because they are images of his infinity. Thus when he made the beauteous frame of heaven and earth, he rejoyced in it, and glorified himself, because it was the glasse in which he beheld his wisdom, and Almighty power: And when God destroyed the old world, in that also he glorified himself; for in those waters he saw the image of his justice; they were the looking-glasse for that Attribute; and God is said to *laugh at*, and *rejoyce in the destruction of a sinner*, because he is pleased with the Oeconomy of his own lawes, and the excellent proportions he hath made of his judgements, consequent to our sins. But above all, God rejoyced in his Holy Son, for he was the image of the Divinity, *the character and expresse image of his person*, in him he beheld his own Essence, his wisdom, his power, his justice, and his person, and he was that excellent instrument designed from eternall ages to represent as in a double mirrour, not onely the glories of God to himself, but also to all the world; and he glorified God by the instrument of obedience, in which God beheld his own dominion, and the sanctity of his lawes clearly represented; and he saw his justice glorified, when it was fully satisfied by the passion of his Son; and so he hath transmitted to us a great manner of the Divine glorification, being become to us the Authour, and the Example of giving glory to God after the manner of men, that is, by well-doing, and patient suffering, by obeying his lawes, and submitting to his power, by imitating his holinesse, and confessing his goodnesse, by remaining innocent, or becoming penitent: for this also is called in the Text

C **GIVING GLORY TO THE LORD OUR GOD.**

D For he that hath dishonoured God by sins, that is, hath denied, by a morall instrument of duty, and subordination, to confesse the glories of his power, and the goodnesse of his lawes, and hath dishonoured, and despised his mercy, which God intended as an instrument of our piety, hath no better way to glorifie God, then by returning to his duty, to advance the honour of the Divine Attributes in which he is pleased to communicate himself, and to have entercourse with man. He that repents, confesses his own error, and the righteousness of Gods lawes, and by judging himself confesses that he deserves punishment, and therefore that God

E is righteous if he punishes him: and by returning, confesses God to be the fountain of felicity, and the foundation of true, solid, and permanent joyes, saying in the sense and passion of the Disciples, *whither shall we go? for thou hast the words of eternall life*: and by humbling himself, exalts God by making the proportions

SERMON V. of distance more immense, and vast; and as repentance does contain in it all the parts of holy life which can be performed by a returning sinner (all the acts, and habits of vertue, being but parts, or instances, or effects of repentance): so all the actions of a holy life do constitute the masse and body of all those instruments whereby God is pleased to glorifie himself. * For if God is glorified in the Sun and Moon, in the rare fabrick of the honeycombs, in the discipline of Bees, in the œconomy of Pistiares, in the little houses of birds, in the curiosity of an eye, God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of himself from those pretty mirrours, which like a crevice in a wall thorow a narrow perspective transmit the species of a vast excellency: much rather shall God be pleased to behold himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emissions of our will and understanding; these being rationall and apt instruments to expresse him, farre better then the naturall, as beeing neerer communications of himself.

But I shall no longer discourse of the Philosophy of this expression; certain it is, that in the stile of Scripture, *repentance* is the great glorification of God; and the Prophet, by calling the people to *give God glory*, calls upon them to *repent*; and so expresses both the duty and the event of it; the event being [*Glory to God on high, and peace on earth, and good will towards men*] by the sole instrument of *repentance*. And this was it which Joshuah said to Achan, [Give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him: that one act of repentance is one act of glorifying God: and this David acknowledged, Against thee onely have I sinned, *ut tu iustificeris*, that thou mightest be justified, or cleared, that is, that God may have the honour of being righteous, and we the shame of receding from so excellent a perfection: or as S. Paul quotes and explicates the place. *Let God be true and every man a liar, as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged*. But to clear the sense of this expression of the Prophet, observe the words of S. John: *and men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God who hath power over those plagues, and they repented not to give him glory*.

So that having strength and reason from these so many authorities, I may be free to read the words of my Text thus, [*Repent of all your sins before God cause darknesse, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains*] and then we have here the duty of repentance, and the time of its performance; it must be *a seasonable and timely repentance*, a repentance which must begin before our darknesse begin, a repentance in the day time, *ut dum dies est aperemini*, that ye may work while it is to day, lest if we *stumble upon the dark mountains*, that is, fall into the ruines of old

A old age, which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way to be a craggy mountain; or if we stumble and fall into our last sickness, instead of health God sends us to our grave, and instead of light and salvation which we then confidently look for, he make our state to be outer darknesse, that is, misery irremediable, misery eternall.

B This exhortation of the Prophet was alwayes full of caution and prudence, but now it is highly necessary; since men who are so clamorously called to repentance that they cannot avoid the necessity of it, yet that they may reconcile an evil life with the hopes of heaven, have crowded this duty into so little room, that it is almost strangled and extinct; and they have lopped off so many members, that they have reduced the whole body of it to the dimensions of a little finger, sacrificing their childhood to vanity, their youth to lust, and to intemperance, their manhood to ambition and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires, and unholy actions; and yet still further, giving their old age to covetousnesse and oppression, to the world, and to the Devil; and after all this what remains for God and for Religion? Oh, for that, they will do well enough; upon their death-bed they will think a few godly thoughts, they will send for a Priest to minister comfort to them; they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy Sacrament, and leave their goods behinde them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some Dole, and issues of the almes-basket to the poor; and if after all this they die quietly, and like a lamb, and be canoniz'd by a brib'd flatterer in a funerall sermon, they make no doubt but they are children of the kingdom, and perceive not their folly, till without hope of remedy they roar in their expectations of a certain, but a horrid eternity of pains.

C * Certainly nothing hath made more ample harvests for the Devil, then the deferring of repentance upon vain confidences, and lessening it in the extention of parts, as well as intensification of degrees, while we imagine that a few tears, and scatterings of devotion are enough to expiate the baseness of a fifty or threescore yeers impiety. This I shall endeavour to cure, by shewing what it is to repent, and that repentance implies in it the duty of a life, or of many and great, of long and lasting parts of it; and then by direct arguments, shewing that repentance put off to our death-bed is invalid and ineffectuall, sick, languid, and impotent, like our dying bodies and disabled faculties.

E 1. First therefore, Repentance implies a deep sorrow, as the beginning and introduction of this duty; not a superficial sigh, or tear, not a calling our selves sinners, and miserable persons; this is far from that *godly sorrow that worketh repentance*; and yet I wish there were none in the world, or none amongst us, who cannot remember that ever they have done this little towards the abolition

SERM. V. abolition of their multitudes of sins; but yet if it were not a hearty, pungent sorrow, a sorrow that shall break the heart in pieces; a sorrow that shall so irreconcile us to sin, as to make us rather chose to die then to sin, it is not so much as the beginning of repentance. But in Holy scripture, when the people are called to repentance and sorrow (which is ever the prologue to it) marches sadly, and first opens the scene, it is ever expressed to be great, clamorous and sad: it is called [a weeping sorely] in the verse next after my text, [a weeping with the bitterness of heart; a turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and mourning; a weeping day and night; the sorrow of heart; the breaking of the spirit; the mourning like a dove, and chattering like a swallow;] and if we observe the threnes and sad accents of the Prophet *Jeremy* when he wept for the sins of his Nation, the heart-breakings of *David* when he mourned for his adultery and murder, and the bitter tears of Saint *Peter* when he washed off the guilt and baseness of his fall, and the denying his Master; we shall be sufficiently instructed in this preludium or introduction to repentance; and that it is not every breath of a sigh, or moisture of a tender eye, not every crying [Lord have mercy upon me] that is such a sorrow as begins our restitution to the state of grace and Divine favour: but such a sorrow that really condemnes our selves, and by an active, effectual sentence declares us worthy of stripes and death, of sorrow and eternall pains, and willingly endures the first to prevent the second; and weeps and mourns, and fasts to obtain of God but to admit us to a possibility of restitution: and although all sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and sensitive trouble (which differs according to the temper of the body, custome, the sexe, and accidental tendernes) yet it is not a Godly sorrow unless it really produce these effects; that is, 1. That it makes us really to hate, and 2. actually to decline sin, and 3. produce in us a fear of Gods anger, a sense of the guilt of his displeasure; and 4. Then, such consequent trouble as can consist with such apprehension of the Divine displeasure: which if it expresse not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin, in confessing the goodness and justice of God threatening or punishing us, in patiently bearing the rod of God, in confession of our sins, in accusation of our selves, in perpetual begging of pardon, and mean and base opinions of our selves, and in all the natural productions from these; according to our temper and constitution; it must be a sorrow of the reasonable faculty, the greatest in its kinde; and if it be lesse in kinde; or not productive of these effects, it is not a godly sorrow, nor the exordium of repentance.

But I desire that it be observed, that sorrow for sins, is not Repentance;

Ezek. 27. 31.
Joel 2. 13.

See Rule of H.
living. D. of
repentance.
P 335.

A penance; not that duty which gives glory to God, so as to obtain of him that he will glorifie us. Repentance is a great volume of duty; and Godly sorrow is but the frontispiece or title page: it is the harbinger or first introduction to it; or if you will consider it in the words of Saint Paul: [Godly sorrow worketh repentance] sorrow is the Parent, and repentance is the product; and therefore it is a high piece of ignorance to suppose, that a crying out and roaring for our sins upon our death-bed can reconcile us to God; our crying to God must be so early, and so lasting, as to be able to teem, and produce such a daughter, which must live long, and grow from an Embryo to an infant, from infancy to childhoo, from thence to the fulnesse of the stature of Christ, and then it is a holy and a happy sorrow: but if it be a sorrow onely of a death-bed, it is a fruitlesse shower, or like the rain of Sodom not the beginning of repentance, but the kindling of a flame, the commencement of an eternal sorrow. For Ahab had a great sorrow, but it wrought nothing upon his spirit, it did not reconcile his affections to his duty, and his duty to God. Judas had so great a sorrow for betraying the innocent blood of his Lord, that it was intolerable to his Spirit, and he burst in the middle: and if meer sorrow be repentance, then hell is full of penitents, for [there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for ever more.

B

C

2 Cor. 7.

Let us therefore beg of God (as Cales daughter did of her Father) *dedisti mihi terram aridam, da etiam & irriguam*, thou hast given me a dry land, give me also a land of waters, a dwelling place in tears, rivers of tears, *ut quoniam non sumus digni oculos orando ad cælum levare, at sumus digni oculos plorando cecare*, as Saint Austins expression is, that because we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to heaven in prayer, yet we may be worthy to weep our selves blinde for sin, the meaning is, that we beg sorrow of God, such a sorrow as may be sufficient to quench the flames of lust, and surmount the hills of our pride, and may extinguish our thirst of covetousnesse; that is, a sorrow that shall be an effective principle of arming all our faculties against sin, and heartily setting upon the work of grace, and the persevering labours of a holy life. I shall onely adde one word to this: That our sorrow for sin is not to be estimated by our tears, and our sensible expressions, but by our active hatred, and dereliction of sin: and is many times unperceived in outward demonstration. It is reported of the Mother of Peter Lombard, Gratian, and Comestor, that she having had three sons begotten in unhallowed embraces, upon her death-bed did omit the recitation of those crimes to her confessor; adding this for Apology, that her three sons proved persons so eminent in the Church, that their excellency was abundant recompence for her demerit: and therefore she could not grieve, because God had glorified himself so much by three instruments so

D

E

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excellent

SERM. V. excellent; and that although her sin had abounded, yet Gods grace A
 did superabound. Her confessor replied, *at dolo saltem quod dolere*
non possis, grieve that thou canst not grieve: and so must we, al-
 wayes fear that our trouble for sin is not great enough, that our
 sorrow is too remisse, that our affections are indifferent; but we can
 onely be sure that our sorrow is a godly sorrow, when it worketh
 repentance; that is, when it makes us hate and leave all our sin,
 and take up the crosse of patience or penance: that is, confesse our
 sin, accuse our selves, condemn the action by hearty sentence; and
 then, if it hath no other emanation but fasting and prayer for its
 pardon, and hearty industry towards its abolition, our sorrow is not B
 reproveable.

For sorrow alone will not do it; there must follow a total dere-
 liction of our sin; and this is the first part of repentance. Concern-
 ing which, I consider, that it is a sad mistake amongst many that
 do some things towards repentance, that they mistake the first ad-
 dresses, and instruments of this part of repentance for the whole
 duty it self. Confession of sins is in order to the dereliction of them;
 but then Confession must not be like the unlading of a ship to take
 in new stowage; or the vomits of intemperance, which ease the
 stomach that they may continue the merry meeting: but such a con- C
 fession is too frequent, in which men either comply with custome,
 or seek to ease a present load, or gripe of conscience, or are willing
 to dresse up their souls against a festival, or hope for pardon up-
 on so easie terms: these are but retirings back to leap the further
 into mischief; or but approaches to God with the lips; no con-
 fession can be of any use, but as it is an instrument of shame to the
 person, of humiliation of the man, and dereliction of the sin, and
 receives its recompence but as it adds to these purposes: all other,
 is like the bleating of the calves, and the lowing of the Oxen which
 Saul reserved after the spoil of Agag: they proclaim the sin, but D
 do nothing towards its cure; they serve Gods end to make us justly
 to be condemned out of our own mouths, but nothing at all towards
 our absolution. * Nay, if we proceed further, to the greatest
 expressions of humiliation (parts of which I reckon, fasting, pray-
 ing for pardon, judging and condemning of our selves by instan-
 ces of a present indignation against a crime) yet unlesse this proceed
 so far as to a total deletion of the sin, to the extirpation of every
 vitious habit, God is not glorified by our repentance, nor we se-
 cured in our eternal interest. Our sin must be brought to judge-
 ment, and like Antinous in *Homor*, layed in the mids as the sacrifice E
 and the cause of all the mischief.

Am. i. 3. et 4. ubi dicitur quod si quis peccatum suum non confiteretur, non erit ei pars in civitate.
 This is the murderer, this is the Achan, this is he that troubles Is-
 rael

A rael; let the sin be confessed and carried with the pomps and solemnities of sorrow to its funeral, and so let the murderer be slain: But if after all the forms of confession and sorrow, fasting, and humiliation, and pretence of doing the will of God, we spare Agag and the fattest of the cattel, our delicious sins, and still leave an unlawful King, and a tyrant sin to reign in our mortal bodies, we may pretend what we will towards repentance, but we are no better penitents then Ahab, no neerer to the obtaining of our hopes then Esau was to his birthright, for whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears.

B Well! let us suppose our penitent advanced thus far as that he decrees against all sin, and in his hearty purposes resolves to decline it, as in a severe sentence he hath condemned it as his betrayer and his murderer; yet we must be curious (for now only the repentance properly begins) that it be not only like the springings of the thorny or the high way ground, soon up and soon down: For some men when a sadnesse or an unhandsome accident surprizes them, then they resolve against their sin, but like the goats in Aristotle they give their milk no longer then they are stung: as soon as the thorns are removed, these men return to their first hardnesse, and resolve then to act their first temptation.

C Others there are who never resolve against a sin, but either when they have no temptation to it, or when their appetites are newly satisfied with it, like those who immediately after a full dinner resolve to fast at supper, and they keep it till their appetite returns, and then their resolution unties like the cords of vanity, or the gossamere against the violence of the Northern winde. Thus a lustfull person fills all the capacity of his lust, and when he is wearied, and the sin goes off with unquietnesse and regret, and the appetite falls down like a horseleech, when it is ready to burst with putrifaction and an unwholsome plethory;

D then he resolves to be a good man and could almost vow to be a Hermit, and hates his lust, as Amnon hated his sister Thamar, just when he had newly acted his unworthy rape; but the next spring-tide that comes, every wave of the temptation, makes an inrode upon the resolution, and gets ground, and prevails against it, more then his resolution prevailed against his sin: How many drunken persons, how many Swearers resolve daily and houely against their sin, and yet act them not once the lesse for all their infinite heap of shamefully retreating purposes *

E That resolution that begins upon just grounds of sorrow and severe judgement, upon fear and love, that is made in the midst of a temptation, that is inquisitive into all the means and instruments of the cure, that prays perpetually against a sin; that watches continually against a surprize,

SERMON V. surprize, and never sinks into it by deliberation; that fights earnestly and carries on the war prudently and prevails by a never ceasing diligence against the temptation: that only is a pious and well-begun repentance. They that have their fits of a quartan, well and ill for ever, and think themselves in perfect health, when the ague is retired till its period returns, are dangerously mistaken. Those intervals of imperfect and fallacious resolution, are nothing but states of death: and if a man should depart this world in one of those godly fits (as he thinks them) he is no nearer to obtain his blessed hope, then a man in the stone collick is to health when his pain is eased for the present, his disease still remaining, and threatening an unwelcome return. That resolution only is the beginning of a holy repentance which goes forth into act, and whose acts enlarge into habits, and whose habits are productive of the fruits of a holy life.

From hence we are to take our estimate, whence our resolutions of piety must commence. He that resolves not to live well till the time comes that he must die, is ridiculous in his great designe, as he is impertinent in his intermedial purposes, and vain in his hope. Can a dying man to any real effect resolve to be chaste? (for vertue must be an act of election, and chastity is the contesting against a proud and an imperious lust, active flesh, and insinuating temptation) And what doth he resolve against who can no more be tempted to the sin of unchastity, then he can returne back again to his youth and vigour. And it is considerable, that since all the purposes of a holy life which a dying man can make, cannot be reduced to act, by what law, or reason, or covenant, or revelation are we taught to distinguish the resolution of a dying man from the purposes of a living and vigorous person? Suppose a man in his youth and health moved by consideration of the irregularity and deformity of sin, the danger of its productions, the wrath and displeasure of Almighty God, should resolve to leave the puddles of impurity, and walk in the paths of righteousness; can this resolution alone put him into the state of grace; is he admitted to pardon and the favour of God before he hath in some measure performed actually what he so reasonably hath resolved? By no means. For, [resolution and purpose] is in its own nature and constitution an imperfect act, and therefore can signifie nothing without its performance and consummation. It is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as seed-time is to the Autumne, as Eggs are to birds, or as a relative to its correspondent; nothing without it. And can it be imagined that a resolution in our health and life shall be ineffectual without performance, and shall a resolution barely such, do any Good upon our death-bed? Can such purposes

- A purposes prevail against a long impiety rather then against a young and a newly begun state of sin? Will God at an easier rate pardon the sins of fifty or sixty yeers, then the sins of our youth onely, or the iniquity of five yeers, or ten? If a holy life be not necessary to be liv'd, why shall it be necessary to resolve to live it? But if a holy life be necessary, then it cannot be sufficient meerly to resolve it, unlesse this resolution go forth in an actuall and reall service. Vain therefore is the hope of those persons who either go on in their sins, before their last sicknesse, never thinking to return into the wayes of God, from whence they have wandred all their life,
- B never renewing their resolutions and vows of holy living; or if they have, yet their purposes are for ever blasted with the next violent temptation. More prudent was the prayer of David, [*Oh spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen:*] And something like it was the saying of the Emperour Charles the fift, *Inter vita negotia & mortis diem oportet spacium intercedere*: When ever our holy purposes are renewed, unlesse God gives us time to act them, to mortifie and subdue our lusts, to conquer and subdue the whole kingdome of sin, to rise from our grave and be clothed with nerves and flesh and a new skin,
- C to overcome our deadly sicknesse, and by little and little to return to health and strength; unlesse we have grace and time to do all this, our sins will lie down with us in our graves. * For when a man hath contracted a long habit of sin, and it hath been growing upon him ten or twenty, fourty or fifty yeers, whose acts he hath daily or hourly repeated, and they are grown to a second nature to him, and have so prevailed upon the ruines of his spirit, that the man is taken *captive by the Devil at his will*, he is fast bound as a slave rugging at the oare, that he is grown in love with his fetters, and longs to be doing the work of sin, it is likely that after
- D all this progresse and growth in sin (in the wayes of which he runs fast without any impediment) is it (I say) likely, that a few dayes or weekes of sicknesse can recover him? [the especiall hindrances of that state I shall afterwards consider] but, Can a man be supposed so prompt to piety and holy living, a man (I mean) that hath lived wickedly a long time together, can he be of so ready and active a vertue upon the sudden, as to recover in a moneth, or a week what he hath been undoing in 20. or 30. yeers? Is it so easie to build, that a weak and infirm person, bound hand and foot shall be able to build more in three dayes, then was a building above fourty yeers? Christ did it in a figurative sence; but in this,
- E it is not in the power of any man so suddenly to be recovered from so long a sicknesse. Necessary therefore it is, that all these instruments of our conversion, [*Confession of sins, praying for their pardon, and resolutions to lead a new life*] should begin, [*before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains,*] lest we leave the work onely
- F resolved

SERMON V. resolved upon to be begun, which, it is necessary we should in many degrees finish, if ever we mean to escape the eternall darknesse: For that we should actually abolish the whole body of sin and death, that we should crucifie the old man with his lusts, that we should lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, that we should cast away the works of darknesse, that we should awake from sleep, and arise from death, that we should redeem the time, that we should cleanse our hands and purifie our hearts, that we should have escaped the corruption, (all the corruption) that is in the whole world through lust, that nothing of the old leaven should remain in us, but that we be wholly a new lump, thoroughly transformed and changed in the image of our minds: these are the perpetuall precepts of the Spirit, and the certain duty of man: and that, to have all these in purpose onely, is meerly to no purpose, without the actuall eradication of every vitious habit, and the certain abolition of every criminall adherence, is clearly and dogmatically decreed every where in the Scripture: For (they are the words of Saint Paul) *they that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts: the work is actually done, and sin is dead, or wounded mortally, before they can in any sence belong to Christ, to be a portion of his inheritance: And He that is in Christ is a new creature. For in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature: nothing but a Keeping the Commandments of God: Not all our tears, though we should weep like David and his men at Ziklag, till they could weep no more, or the women of Ramah, or like the weeping in the valley of Hinnom, could suffice, if we retain the affection to any one sin, or have any unrepented of, or unmortified. It is true that a contrite and broken heart, God will not despise. No, he will not. For if it be a hearty and permanent sorrow, it is an excellent beginning of repentance; and God will to a timely sorrow give the grace of repentance: He will not give pardon to sorrow alone; but that which ought to be the proper effect of sorrow, that God shall give. He shall then open the gates of mercy, and admit you to a possibility of restitution; so, that you may be within the covenant of repentance, which if you actually perform, you may expect Gods promise. And in this sence Confession will obtain our pardon; and humiliation will be accepted; and our holy purposes, and pious resolutions shall be accounted for; that is, these being the first steps and addresses to that part of repentance, which consists in the abolition of sins, shall be accepted so far, as to procure so much of the pardon, to do so much of the work of restitution, that God will admit the returning man to a further degree of emendation, to a neerer possibility of working out his salvation: but then, if this sorrow, and confession, and strong purposes begin then when our life is declined towards the West,*

and

Gal 5.24.

Gal 6.15.
Gal 5.6.
1 Cor.7.9.

A and is now ready to set in darknesse and a dismall night; because of themselves they could but procure an admission to repentance, not at all to pardon, and plenary absolution; by shewing that on our death-bed these are too late and ineffectuall, they call upon us to begin betimes, when these imperfect acts may be consummate, and perfect in the actuall performing those parts of holy life, to which they were ordained, in the nature of the thing, and the purposes of God.

B Lastly, suppose all this be done, and that by a long course of strictnesse and severity, mortification and circumspection we have overcome all our vicious and baser habits contracted and grown up on us, like the ulcers and evils of a long surfet, and that we are clean and swept; Suppose that he hath wept and fasted, prayed and vowed to excellent purposes; yet all this is but the one half of repentance; (so infinitely mistaken is the world, to think any thing to be enough to make up repentance;) but to renew us, and restore us to the favour of God, there is required far more then what hath been yet accounted for. See it in the second of S. Peter, 1 Chap. 4, 5. vers. *Having escaped the corruption that is in the world thorough lust: And besides this, giving all diligence, adde to your faith vertue, to vertue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, and so on, to godlinesse, to brotherly kindnesse, and to charity: These things must be in you and abound:* This is the summe totall of repentance; We must not onely have overcome sin, but we must after great diligence have acquired the habits of all those Christian graces which are necessary in the transaction of our affairs, in all relations to God and our neighbour, and our own person. It is not enough to say, *Lord, I thank thee I am no extortioner, no adulterer, not as this Publican;* all the reward of such a poenitent is, that when he hath escaped the corruption of the world, he hath also escaped those heavy judgements which threatned his ruine.

*Nec furtum feci, nec fugi, si mihi dicat
Seros; habes precium; loris non ureris, aio.
Non hominem occidi; non pasces in cruce corvos.*

E If a servant have not robb'd his Master, nor offered to fly from his bondage, he shall scape the *Furca*, his flesh shall not be exposed to birds or fishes; but this is but the reward of innocent slaves; it may be we have escaped the rod of the exterminating Angel, when our sins are crucified; but we shall never enter into the joy of the Lord, unlesse after we have put off the old man with his affections and lusts, we also put on the new man in righteousness and holinesse of life. And this we are taught in most plain doctrine by Saint Paul, [let us lay aside the weight
F 2 that

SERM. V. that doth so easily beset us;] that is the one half; and [then it follows] *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* A

Heb. 12.1.

These are the *fruits meet for repentance*, spoken of by S. John Baptist; that is, when we renew our first undertaking in baptism, and return to our courses of innocence.

*Parcus Deorum cultor, & infrequens,
Infanientis dum sapientiae consultus erro
Nunc retrorsum vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor reliquos —*

B

Revel. 2.

The sense of which words is well given us by S. John; ‘Remember whence thou art fallen, repent; and do thy first works. For all our hopes of heaven rely upon that Covenant which God made with us in Baptism; which is, ‘That being redeemed from our vain conversation, we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all our days. Now when any of us hath prevaricated our part of the Covenant, we must return to that state, and redeem the intermedial time spent in sin by our doubled industry in the ways of grace: we must be reduced to our first estate, and make some proportionable returns of duty, for our sad omissions, and great violations of our Baptismal vow. For God having made no covenant with us, but that which is consigned in Baptism; in the same proportion in which we retain, or return to that, in the same we are to expect the pardon of our sins, and all the other promises Evangelicall; but no otherwise; unless we can shew a new Gospel, or be baptized again by Gods appointment. He therefore that by a long habit, by a state and continued course of sin, hath gone so far from his baptismal purity, as that he hath nothing of the Christian left upon him but his name; that man hath much to do to make his garments clean, to purifie his soul, to take off all the stains of sin, that his spirit may be presented pure to the eyes of God who beholds no impurity. It is not an easie thing to cure a long contracted habit of sin: Let any intemperate person but try in his own instance of drunkenness; or the swearer in the sweetning his unwholsome language: but then so to command his tongue that he never swear, but that his speech be prudent, pious, and apt to edifie the hearer. or in some sense to glorifie God; or to become temperate, to have got a habit of sobriety, or chastity, or humility, is the work of a life: And if we do but consider that he that lives well from his younger yeers, or takes up at the end of his youthfull heats, and enters into the courses of a sober life early, diligently, and vigorously, shall finde himself after the studies and labours of 20. or 30. yeers piety, but a very imperfect person: many degrees of pride left unrooted up, many

C

D

E

A many inroads of intemperance or beginnings of excess, much
 indevotion and backwardness in religion, many temptations to
 contest against, and some infirmities which he shall never say he
 hath master'd; we shall finde the work of a holy life is not to be
 deferred till our dayes are almost done, till our strengths are de-
 cayed, our spirits are weak and our lust strong, our habits con-
 firmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent: for what
 is very hard to be done, and is alwayes done imperfectly when
 there is length of time, and a lesse work to do, and more abilities
 to do it with all: when the time is short, and almost expired, and
 the work made difficult and vast, and the strengths weaker, and
 the faculties are disabled, will seem little lesse then absolutely im-
 possible. * I shall end this generall consideration with the question
 of the Apostle. *If the righteous scarcely be saved,* (if it be so diffi-
 cult to overcome our sins, and obtain vertuous habits; difficult
 (I say) to a righteous, a sober, and well living person, where shall
 the ungodly and the sinner appear? What shall become of him,
 who by his evil life hath not onely removed himself from the af-
 fections, but even from the possibilities of vertue? *He that hath lived
 in sin will die in sorrow.*

F The

C
 D
 E

The Invalidity of a death-bed Repentance.

Part II.

BUt I shall pursue this great and necessary truth, first 3 by shewing what parts and ingredients of repentance are assigned, when it is described in holy Scripture. Secondly, by shewing the necessities, the absolute necessities of a holy life, and what it means in Scripture to [*live holily*]. Thirdly, by considering what directions or intimations we have concerning the last time of beginning to repent; and what is the longest period that any man may venture with safety: And in the prosecution of these particulars, we shall remove the objections; those aprons of fig-leaves which men use for their shelter to palliate their sin, and to hide themselves from that, from which no rocks or mountains shall protect them, though they fall upon them; that is, the wrath of God.

First, That repentance is not onely an abolition, and extinction of the body of sin, a bringing it to the altar, and slaying it before God and all the people; but that we must also *μετὰ δαψνῆς* mingle gold and rich presents, the oblation of good works, and holy habits with the sacrifice, I have already proved: but now if we will see repentance in its stature and integrity of constitution described, we shall finde it to be the one half of all that which God requires of Christians. *Faith and Repentance* are the whole duty of a Christian. Faith is a sacrifice of the understanding to God: Repentance sacrifices the whole will: That, gives the knowing; this, gives up all the desiring faculties: That, makes us Disciples; this, makes us servants of the Holy Jesus. Nothing else was preached by the Apostles, nothing was enjoyned as the duty of man, nothing else did build up the body of Christian religion. So that, as faith contains all that knowledge which is necessary to salvation: So repentance comprehends in it, all the whole practise and working duty of a returning Christian: And this was the sum totall of all that Saint Paul preached to the Gentiles, when in his farewell Sermon to the Bishops and Priests of Ephesus,

A Ephesus, he professed that he kept back nothing that was profitable to them; and yet it was all nothing but this; [*Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*] so that whosoever believes in Jesus Christ, and repents towards God, must make his accounts according to this standard, that is, to believe all that Christ taught him; and to do all that Christ commanded: and this is remarked in Saint Pauls * Catechisme, where he gives a more particular Catalogue of fundamentals: he reckons nothing but Sacraments and faith; of which he enumerates two principal articles [*resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement*] whatsoever is practicall, all the whole duty of man, the practise of all obedience is called *repentance from dead works* which, if we observe the singularity of the phrase, does not mean [*sorrow* For sorrow from dead works, is not sense; but it must mean *mutationem status*, a conversion from dead works, which (as in all motions) supposes two terms; from dead works, to living works, from *the death of sin to the life of righteousness*.

I will adde but two places more, out of each Testament one; in which I suppose you may see every lineament of this great duty described, that you may no longer mistake a grasshopper for an Eagle, Sorrow and holy purposes, for the intire duty of repentance. In the 18. of Ezek. 21. you shall finde it thus described.

[** But if the wicked will turne from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*] or as it is more fully described in Ezek. 33. 14. [*When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; If he turn from his sin, and do not that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed; walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*] Here onely is the condition of pardon; to leave all your sins, to keep all Gods statutes, to walk in them, to abide, to proceed, and make progresse in them; and this, without the interruption by a deadly sin, [*Without committing iniquity*] to make restitution of all the wrongs he hath done, all the unjust money he hath taken, all the oppressions he hath committed, all that must be satisfied for, and repayed according to our ability: we must make satisfaction for all injury to our Neighbours fame, all wrongs done to his soul; he must be restored to that condition of good things thou didst in any sense remove him from: when this is done according to thy utmost power, then thou hast repented truly, then thou hast a title to the promise; *thou shalt surely live, thou shalt not die*, for thy old sins thou hast formerly committed.

E * Onely be pleased to observe this one thing; that this place of Ezekiel is it which is so often mistaken for that common saying, *At what time soever a sinner repents him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickednesse out of my remembrance, saith the*

SERM. VI.

the Lord] For although at what time soever a sinner does repent (as repentance is now explained) God will forgive him, and that, repentance as it is now stated cannot be done [At what time soever] not upon a mans deathbed; yet there are no such words in the whole Bible, nor any neerer to the sense of them, then the words I have now read to you, out of the Prophet Ezekiel. Let that therefore no more deceive you, or be made a colour to countenance a persevering sinner, or a deathbed penitent.

Neither is the duty of Repentance to be bought at an easier rate in the New Testament. You may see it described in the 2 Cor. 7. 11. *Godly sorrow worketh repentance.* Well? but what is that repentance which is so wrought? This it is. *Behold the self same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulnesse it wrought in you, yea what clearing of your selves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge?* These are the fruits of that sorrow that is effectual: these are the parts of repentance; clearing our selves of all that is past, and great carefulnesse for the future, anger at our selves for our old sins, and fear lest we commit the like again, vehement desires of pleasing God, and zeal of holy actions, and a revenge upon our selves for our sins, called by Saint Paul in another place, *a judging our selves lest we be judged of the Lord.* And in pursuance of this truth, the primitive Church did not admit a sinning person to the publike communions with the faithfull, till besides their sorrow they had spent some yeers in an *αγαθοεργία* in doing good works and holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination which led them into those sins whereof they were now admitted to repent. And therefore we finde that they stood in the station of penitents seven yeers, 12. yeers, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God, and his Holy Church.

Scelerum si bene penitet

aradenda cupidinis pravi sunt elements

Et tenera nimis mentes asperioribus

Exornande studijs — Horat.

Repentance is the institution of a philosophical and severe life, an utter extirpation of all unreasonablenesse and impiety, and an addresse to, and a final passing through all the parts of holy living.

Now consider whether this be Imaginable or possible to be done upon our deathbed, when a man is frighted into an involuntary, a sudden, and unchosen piety; *ἡ μετανοία τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν*, faith Hierocles. He that never repents till a violent fear be upon him, till he apprehend himself to be in the jawes of death, ready to give up his unready and unprepared

Hierocles.

ἡ μετανοία
αὐτῶν φιλοσο-
φίας ἀρχὴν ἔ-
χει· ὅτι ἡ ἀ-
νθρώπων ψυχὴ
τὴν ἐλπίδα
φυγῆς, καὶ τὴν
μεταμέλησιν
ζωῆς ἢ αἰσχύ-
νῃ παρασκήσῃ.
See life of H.
Jesus part. 2.
disc. of Re-
pentance.

- A red accounts, till he sees the Judge sitting in all the addressess of dreadfulness and Majesty, just now (as he beleeves) ready to pronounce that fearfull and intolerable sentence of [Go ye cursed into everlasting fire] this man does nothing for the love of God, nothing for the love of vertue; It is just as a condemned man repents that he was a Traytor. but repented not till he was arrested, and sure to die. Such a repentance as this may still consist with as great an affection to sin as ever he had; and it is no thanks to him, if when the knife is at his throat, then he gives good words and flatters. But suppose this man in his health, and the middest of all his lust, it is evident that there are some circumstances of action in which the man would have refused to commit his most pleasing sin. Would not the son of Tarquin have refused to ravish Lucrece, if Junius Brutus had been by him? Would the impurest person in the world act his lust in the market place? or drink off an intemperate goblet if a dagger were placed at his throat? In these circumstances, their fear would make them declare against the present acting their impurities. But does this cure the intemperance of their affections? Let the impure person retire to his closet, and Junius Brutus be engaged in a far distant war, and the dagger be taken from the drunkards throat, and the fear of shame; or death, or judgement be taken from them all, and they shall no more resist their temptation, then they could before remove their fear; and you may as well judge the other persons holy, and haters of their sin, as the man upon his death-bed to be penitent; and rather they then he, by how much this mans fear, the fear of death, and of the infinite pains of hell, the fear of a provoked God, and an angry eternall Judge, are far greater then the apprehensions of a publike shame, or an abused husband, or the poniard of an angry person. * These men then sin not because they dare not, they are frightened from the act, but not from the affection, which is not to be cured but by discourse, and reasonable acts, and humane considerations; of which that man is not naturally capable who is possessed with the greatest fear, the fear of death and damnation. If there had been time to cure his sin, and to live the life of grace, I deny not but God might have begun his conversion with so great a fear, that he should never have wiped off its impression; * but if the man dies then, dies when he onely declaims against and curses his sin, as being the author of his present fear, and apprehended calamity; It is very far from reconciling him to God or hopes of pardon, because it proceeds from a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause, no act of choice, or vertue, but of sorrow, a deserved sorrow, and a miserable, unchosen, unavoidable fear,

* Cogitur a
suis animam
suspendere
tutus,
Atque ut viva-
mus, vivere
desinimus.
Cornel. Gal.

* Nec ad rem
pertinet ubi in-
ciperet, quod
placuerat ut
fieret.

— moriensque recepit
Quas nollet victurus aquas —

He

SERM. VI. He curses sin upon his deathbed and makes a Panegyrick of vertue which in his life time he accounted folly, and trouble, and need-
 lesse vexation. A

Que mans est hodie, cur eadem non puerofuit? Hor. l. 4.

v. Icar his animis incolumes non redcunt gene? Od. 10.

I shall end this first Consideration, with a plain exhortation; that since repentance is a duty of so great and giant-like bulk; let no man croud it up into so narrow room, as that it be strangled in its birth for want of time and aire to breath in. Let it not be put off to that time when a man hath scarce time enough to reckon all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. Will any man hunt the wilde boar in his garden, or bait a bull in his closet, will a woman wrap her childe in her handkerchief, or a Father send his son to school when he is 50 years old? These are undecencies of providence, and the instrument contradicts the end; And this is our case. There is no room for the repentance, no time to act all its essentiall parts; and a childe who hath a great way to go before he be wise, may defer his studies, and hope to become very learned in his old age, and upon his deathbed, as well as a virtuous person, may think to recover from all his ignorances and prejudicate opinions, from all his false principles and evil customs, from his wicked inclinations and ungodly habits, from his fondnesses of vice, and detestations of vertue, from his promptnesse to sin, and unwillingnesse to grace, from his spiritual deadnesse and strong sensuality; upon his death bed (I say) when he hath no naturall strength, and as little spirituall, when he is criminal and impotent, hardned in his vice, and soft in his fears, full of passion, and empty of wisdom, when he is sick and amazed, and timorous and confounded, and impatient, and extremely miserable. B C D

And now when any of you is tempted to commit a sin, remember, that sin will ruine you unlesse you repent of it. * But this (you say) is no news, and so far from affrighting you from sin, that (God knows) it makes men sin the rather. For therefore they venture to act the present temptation, because they know, if they repent, God will forgive them; and therefore they resolve upon both, to sin now, and repent hereafter.

Against this folly I shall not oppose the consideration of their danger, and that they neither know how long they shall live, nor whether they shall die or no in this very act of sin; though this consideration is very materiall, and if they should die in it, or before it is washed off, they perish. But I consider these things. 1. That he that resolves to sin upon a resolution to repent, by every act of sin, makes himself more incapable of repenting, by growing more in love E

- A love with sin, by remembering its pleasures, by serving it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of our spirit: and if you resolve to sin now, because it is pleasant, how do ye know that your appetite will alter? will it not appear pleasant to you next week, and the next week after that, and so for ever? And still you sin, and still you will repent; that is, you will repent when the sin can please you no longer. For so long as it can please you, so long you are tempted not to repent, as well as now to act the sin. And the longer you lie in it, the more you will love it. So that it is in effect to say; I love my sin now, but I will hereafter hate it; only
- B I will act it a while longer, and grow more in love with it, and then I will repent; that is, then I will be sure to hate it, when I shall most love it. 2. To repent signifies to be sorrowful, to be ashamed, and to wish it had never been done. And then see the folly of this temptation. I would not sin, but that I hope to repent of it, that is, I would not do this thing, but that I hope to be sorrowful for doing it, and I hope to come to shame for it, heartily to be ashamed of my doings, and I hope to be in that condition, that I would give all the world I had never done it; that is, I hope to feel and apprehend an evil infinitely greater then the pleasures of my sin; and are these arguments fit to move a man to sin? what can affright a man from it, if these invite him to it? it is as if a man should invite one to be a partner of his treason by telling him, if you will joyn with me, you shall have all these effects by it; you shall be hang'd, drawn and quarter'd, and your blood shall be corrupted, and your estate forfeited, and you shall have many other reasons to wish you had never done it: He that should use this Rhetorick in earnest, might well be accounted a mad man: This is to scare a man, not to allure him, and so is the other when we understand it truly. 3. For I consider, He that repents, wishes he had never done that sin. Now I ask, does he wish so upon reason, or without reason? Surely, if he may when he hath satisfied his lust, ask God pardon, and be admitted upon as easie termes for the time to come as if he had not done the sin, he hath no reason to be sorrowful, or wish he had not done it. For though he hath done it, and pleased himself by enjoying the pleasure of sin for that season, yet all is well again; and let him onely be carefull now, and there is no hurt done, his pardon is certain. How can any man that understands the reason of his actions and passions wish, that he had never done that sin in which then he had pleasure, and now he feels no worse inconvenience. But he that truly repents, wishes, and would give all the world he had never done it. Surely
- E then his present condition in respect of his past sin hath some very great evil in it, why els should he be so much troubled? True, and this it is. He that hath committed sins after baptisme, is fallen out of the favour of God, is tied to hard duty for the time to come, to cry vehemently unto God, to call night and day for pardon, to be in great

SERM. VI. great fear and tremblings of heart, lest God should never forgive him, lest God will never take off his sentence of eternal paines, and in this fear and in some degrees of it he will remain all the dayes of his life, and if he hopes to be quit of that, yet he knowes not how many degrees of Gods anger still hang over his head; how many sad miseries shall afflict, and burne, and purifie him in this world with a sharpnesse so poinant as to divide the marrow from the bones; and for these reasons, as considering man that knows what it is to repent, wishes with his soul, he had never sinned; and therefore grieves in proportion to his former crimes, and present misery and future danger.

And now suppose that you can repent when you will, that is, that you can grieve when you will, (though no man can do it, no man can grieve when he please (though he could shed tears when he list, he cannot grieve without a real, or an apprehended infelicity, but, suppose it, and that he can fear when he please, and that he can love when he please, or what he please; that is, suppose a man to be able to say to his palate, though I love sweet-meats, yet to morrow will I hate and loath them, and believe them bitter and distastful things; suppose (I say) all these impossibilities, yet since, repentance does suppose a man to be in a state of such real misery, that he hath reason to curse the day in which he sinned, is this a fit argument to invite a man, that is in his wits, to sin? to sin in hope of repentance? as if dangers of falling into hell, and fear of the Divine anger, and many degrees of the Divine judgements, and a lasting sorrow, and a perpetual labour, and a never ceasing trembling, and a troubled conscience, and a sorrowful spirit were fit things to be desired or hoped for.

The sum is this. He that commits sins shall perish eternally if he never does repent. And if he does repent and yet untimely, he is not the better; and if he does not repent, with an intire, a perfect and compleat repentance, he is not the better: But if he does, yet repentance is a duty full of fears and sorrow, and labour; a vexation to the spirit, an afflictive, poenal, or punitive duty, a duty which suffers for sin, and labours for grace, which abides and suffers little images of hell in the way to heaven; and though it be the onely way to felicity, yet it is beset with thorns and daggers of sufferance, and with rocks and mountains of duty. Let no man therefore dare to sin upon hopes of repentance: for he is a fool and a hypocrite, that now chooseth and approves, what he knowes hereafter he must condemn.

2. The second generall consideration is, The necessity, the absolute necessity of holy living. 'God hath made a Covenant with us, that we must give up our selves, bodies and souls, not a dying, but a living, and healthful sacrifice. He hath forgiven all our old sins, and we have bargained to quit them, from the time that

AA that we first come to Christ, and give our names to him; and to SERM. VI.
 keep all his commandments. We have taken the Sacramentall
 oath, like that of the old Romane Militia; *und quidem, & without re-
 quicken upon, und the way to heaven, und again, we must believe, and obey,*
 and do all that is commanded us; and keep our station, and fight
 against the flesh, the world, and the devil; not to throw away our
 military girdle, and we are to do what is bidden us, nor to die for
 it; even all that is bidden us, according to our power. For, pre-
 tend not, that Gods Commandements are impossible. It is disho-
 nourable to think God enjoyns us to do more then he enables us to
 do; and it is a contradiction to say, we cannot do all that we can;
 B and *[through Christ which strengthens me, I can do all things, saith*
S. Paul,] however, we can do to the utmost of our strength, and
 beyond that we cannot take thought; impossibilities enter not into
 deliberation, but according to our abilities; and naturall powers,
 assisted by Gods grace, so God hath covenanted with us to live a
 holy life. *[For in Christ Jesus nothing availeth but a new creature,*
nothing but faith working by charity, nothing but keeping the Com-
mandements of God.] They are all the words of S. Paul before
 quoted; to which he addes, *and as many as walk according to this*
 C *rule, peace be on them and mercy.]* This is the Covenant, *[they are the*
Israel of God] upon those peace and mercy shall abide; if they be-
 come a new creature, wholly transformed in the Image of their
 minde; if they have faith, and this faith be an operative working
 faith, a faith that produces a holy life, a *faith that works by charity;*
 if they keep the Commandements of God, then they are within the
 Covenant of mercy, but not else; for, *in Christ Jesus nothing else*
availeth. * To the same purpose are those words *Hebr. 12. 14.*
Follow peace with all men, and holinesse, without which no man shall
see the Lord. Peace with all men.] implies both justice and charity,
 D without which it is impossible to preserve peace: *Holinesse* im-
 plies all our duty towards God, universall diligence; and this must
 be followed, that is, pursued with diligence, in a lasting course of
 life and exercise, and without this, we shall never see the face of
 God. I need urge no more authorities to this purpose; these two
 are as certain and convincing as two thousand, and since thus much
 is actually required, and is the condition of the Covenant; it is
 certain that sorrow for not having done what is commanded to be
 done; and a purpose to do what is necessary to be actually perfor-
 med, will not acquit us before the righteous judgement of God.
 E * *[For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us that]*
denying ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, wee should live soberly, justly,
and soberly in this present world.] for upon these termes alone
 we must look for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the
 great God; and our Saviour Jesus Christ. * I shall no longer insist
 upon this particular, but onely propound it to your consideration.

SERM. VI. To what purpose are all those Commandements in scripture, of every page almost in it, of *living holily*, and according to the Commandements of God, of *adorning the Gospel of God*, of *walking as in the day*, of *walking in light*, of *pure and undefiled religion*, of *being holy as God is holy*, of *being humble and meek*, as *Christ is humble*, of *putting on the Lord Jesus*, of *living a spirituall life*, but that it is the purpose of God, and the intention and designe of Christ dying for us, and the Covenant made with man, that we should expect heaven upon no other termes in the world, but of a holy life, in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus.

Now if a vicious person, when he comes to the later end of his dayes, one that hath lived a wicked, ungodly life, can for any thing he can do upon his death-bed; be said to live a holy life: then his hopes are not desperate: but he that hopes upon this only, for which God hath made him no promise, I must say of him as Galen said of consumptive persons, ὅτι πλεον ἐλπίζουσιν τοὺς ἡμετέροισιν χρόνους ἔχουσιν: the more they hope, the worse they are: and the relying upon such hopes is an approach to the grave, and a sad eternity.

Peleus & Priami transit, vel Nestoris ætas

& fuerat serum jam tibi desinere.

Eja age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque

Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil. Mart. l. 2. ep. 64.

And now it will be a vain question to ask, whether or no God cannot save a dying man that repents after a vicious life? For it is true, God can do it if he please: and he can raise children to Abraham out of the stones, and he can make ten thousand worlds if he sees good, and he can do what he list, and he can save an ill living man though he never repent at all, so much as upon his death-bed. All this he can do: but Gods power is no ingredient into this question: we are never the better that God can do it, unlesse he also will: and whether he will or no, we are to learn from himself, and what he hath declared to be his will in holy Scripture. Nay since God hath said, that without actuall holinesse no man shall see God, God by his own will hath restrained his power, and though absolutely he can do all things, yet he cannot do against his own word. * And indeed the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christs burden is so light, his yoke is so easie, that it is a shamelesse impudence to expect so great glories at a lesse rate then so little a service, at a lower rate then a holy life. It cost the Eternall Son of God his life-blood to obtain heaven for us upon that condition, and who then shall die again for us, to get heaven for us, upon easier conditions? What would you do if God should command you to kill your eldest son? or to work in the mines for a thousand yeers together? or to fast all thy life time with bread and water? were not

A not heaven a great bargain even after all this? and when God requires nothing of us but to live soberly, justly, and godly, (which very things of themselves, to man are a very great felicity, and necessary to his present well-being) shall we think this to be a load, and an unsufferable burden? and that heaven is so little a purchase at that price, that God in meer justice will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises in exchange for all our duty? Strange it should be so: but stranger that any man should rely upon such a vanity, when from Gods word he hath nothing to warrant such a confidence. But these men do like the Tyrant *Dianysius*, who stole from *Apollo* his golden cloak, and gave him a cloak of Arcadian home-spun, saying that this was lighter in summer, and warmer in winter. These men sacrilegiously rob God of the service of all their golden dayes, and serve him in their hoary head, in their furs and grave-clothes; and pretend that this late service is more agreeable to the Divine mercy on one side, and humane infirmity on the other, and so dispute themselves into an irrecoverable condition, having no other ground to rely upon a death-bed, or late-begun-repentance, but because they resolve to enjoy the pleasures of sin, and for heaven they will put that to the venture of an after-game. These men *swim in the flesh*, and would *reap in the spirit*, live to the Devil, and die to God, and therefore it is but just in God that their hopes should be desperate, and their craft be folly, and their condition be, the unexpected, unfear'd inheritance of an eternall sorrow.

Lastly. Our last enquiry is into the time, the last or latest time of beginning our repentance. Must a man repent a year, or two, or seven years, or ten, or twenty before his death? or what is the last period after which all repentance will be untimely and ineffectual? To this captious question I have many things to oppose.

D 1. We have entered into covenant with God, to serve him from the day of our Baptisme to the day of our death. He hath *sworn* this oath to us, that he would grant unto us, that wee being delivered from fear of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holinesse and righteousness before him [all the dayes of our life]. Now although God will not *forget our infirmities*, but passe by the weakneses of an honest, a watchfull, and industrious person; yet the Covenant he makes with us is from the day of our first voluntary profession to our grave; and according as wee by sins retire from our first undertaking; so our condition is insecure: there is no other Covenant made with us, no new beginnings of another period, but if we be returned, and sin be cancelled, and grace be actually obtained; then we are in the first condition of pardon; but because it is uncertain when a man can have mastered his vices, and obtained the graces, therefore no man can tell any set time when he must begin.

3.

Luk. i. 7. 4.

SERM. VI

Heb. 12.1
Ver. 3.

Heb. 12.16.

2. Scripture describing the duty of repenting sinners, names no other time but *[to day. To day if ye will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts.]* 3. The duty of a Christian is described in Scripture, to be such as requires length of time, and a continued industry. *[Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.]* and *[Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your mindes.]* So great a preparation is not for the agonie and contention of an hour, or a day, or a week, but for the whole life of a Christian, or for great parts of its abode. 4. There is a certain period and time set for our repentance, and beyond that all our industrie is ineffectuall. There is a *day of visitation, our own day*, and there is a *day of visitation, that is Gods day*. This appeared in the case of Jerusalem. *[O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the time of thy visitation, at least in this thy day.]* Well! they neglected it, and then there was a time of Gods visitation which was *his day*; called in Scripture, *[the day of the Lord]* and because they had neglected their own day, they fell into inevitable ruine: No repentance could have prevented their finall ruine. And this which was true in a Nation, is also clearly affirmed true in the case of single persons. *[Look diligently lest any fail of the grace of God, lest there be any person among you as Esau, who sold his birth-right, and afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for his repentance, though hee sought it carefully with tears.]* Esau had time enough to repent his bargain as long as hee lived; he wept sorely for his folly, and carefulesse sat heaue upon his soul, and yet he was not heard, nor his repentance accepted; for the time was past: And *[take heed]* saith the Apostle, lest it come to passe to any of you to be in the same case. Now if ever there be a time in which repentance is too late, it must be the time of our death-bed, and the last time of our life: And after a man is fallen into the displeasure of Almighty God, the longer hee lies in his sinne without repentance and emendation, the greater is his danger, and the more of his allowed time is spent, and no man can antecedently, or before-hand, bee sure that the time of his repentance is not past; and those who neglect the call of God, and refuse to hear him call in the day of grace, *God will laugh at them when their calamity comes: they shall call, and the Lord shall not hear them.* * And this was the case of the five foolish virgins when the arrest of death surprized them: they discovered their want of oyl, they were troubled at it, they beg'd oyl, they were refused, they did something towards the procuring of the oil of grace, (for they went out to buy oil) and after all this stir the bridegroom came before they had finished their journey, and they were shut out from the communion of the bridegrooms joyes.

Therefore concerning the time of beginning to repent, no man is

A is certain but he that hath done his work. *Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat*, said Seneca. He onely dies cheerfully who stood waiting for death in a ready dresse of a long preceding preparation. He that repents to day, repents late enough that he did not begin yesterday: But he that puts it off till to morrow is vain and miserable.

— *hodie tam posthume vivere serum est* Martial: l. 2. ep. 90.
Ille sapit quisquis posthume vixit heri.

B Well! but what will you have a man do that hath lived wickedly, and is now cast upon his death-bed? Shall this man despair, and neglect all the actions of piety, and the instruments of restitution in his sicknesse? No, God forbid. Let him do what he can then; It is certain it will be little enough: for all those short gleames of piety, and flashes of lightning will help towards the alleviating some degrees of misery; and if the man recovers, they are good beginnings of a renewed piety: and Ahabs tears and humiliation, though it went no further, had a proportion of a reward, though nothing to the portions of eternity. so that he that sayes,
C it is every day necessary to repent, cannot be supposed to discourage the piety of any day: a death-bed piety, when things are come to that sad condition may have many good purposes: therefore even then neglect nothing that can be done. Well! But shall such persons despair of salvation? To them I shall onely return this. That they are to consider the conditions which on one side God requires of us, and on the other side, whether they have done accordingly? Let them consider upon what termes God hath promised salvation, and whether they have made themselves capable by performing their part of the obligation. If they have not, I must
D tell them, that, not to hope where God hath made no promise, is not the *sin* of despair, but the *misery* of despair. A man hath no ground to hope that ever he shall be made an Angel, and yet, that not hoping, is not to be called, *despair*: and no man can hope for heaven without repentance; And for such a man to despair, is not the sin, but the misery. If such persons have a promise of heaven, let them shew it, and hope it, and enjoy it; if they have no promise, they must thank themselves, for bringing themselves into a condition without the Covenant, without a promise, hopelesse and miserable.

E But will not trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ save such a man? For that we must be tried by the word of God: In which there is no contract at all made with a dying person that hath lived in Name a Christian, in practise a Heathen: and we shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our blessed Saviour, if we make them to be an Umbrello to shelter our impious and ungodly living.

But

SERM. VI.

Titus 2.14.

1 Pet. 2.24.

See life of Je-
sus. Disc. of
Repentance.
part. 2.Artian. Epic-
tet. l. 1. c. 15.

but that no such person may after a wicked life repose himself in his deathbed upon Christs merits, observe but these two places of scripture [*Our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave himself for us*] what to do? that we might live as we list? and hope to be saved by his merits? 'No But [*that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works,* These things speak and exhort,] saith Saint Paul. But more plainly yet, in S. Peter [*Christ have our sins in his own body on the tree.*] To what end? [*that we being dead unto sin should live unto righteousness.*] since therefore our living a holy life is the end of Christs dying that sad and holy death for us, he that trusts on it to evil purposes, and to excuse his vicious life, does (as much as lies in him) make void the very purpose and designe of Christs passion, and dishonours the blood of the everlasting covenant: which covenant was confirmed by the blood of Christ: but as it brought peace from God, so it requires a holy life from us.

But why may not be saved as well as the thief upon the crosse? even because our case is nothing alike. When Christ dies once more for us, we may look for such another instance; not till then, But this thief did but then come to Christ; he knew him not before; and his case was as if a Turk or heathen should be converted to Christianity, and be baptized, and enter newly into the Covenant upon his deathbed. Then God pardons all his sins; and so God does to Christians when they are baptized, or first give up their names to Christ by a voluntary confirmation of their baptismal vow: but when they have once entred into the Covenant, they must performe what they promise, and to what they are obliged. The thief had made no contract with God in Jesus Christ, and therefore failed of none; onely the defaultances of the state of ignorance Christ paid for at the thieves admision. But we that have made a covenant with God in baptisme, and failed of it all our dayes, and then return at night, when we cannot work; have nothing to plead for our selves, because we have made all that to be uselesse to us which God with so much mercy and miraculous wisdom, gave us to secure our interest, and hopes of heaven,

And therefore let no Christian man who hath covenanted with God to give him the servise of his life, think that God will be answered with the sighs and prayers of a dying man; for all that great obligation which lies upon us cannot be transacted into an instant, when we have loaded our souls with sin, and made them empty of vertue; we cannot so soon grow up to a perfect man in Christ Jesus. *ἡ δὲ ὥρα μετὰ τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ζῆντος* you cannot have an apple, or a cherry, but you must stay its proper periods, and let it blossom and knot, and grow and ripen, [*and in due season we shall reap if we faint not*] (saith the Apostle) far much lesse may we expect that the fruits of repentance, and the issues and degrees of holiness shall be

A be gathered in a few dayee or hours. γνώμης δ' ἀνθρώπου καρπὸν θεὸς ὕμῳ
 δ' ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐνυχάλῳς κηρύσσει; you must not expect such fruits in a little
 time, nor with little labour.

Suffer therefore not your selves to be deceived by false princi-
 ples, and vain confidences; for no man can in a moment root out
 the long contracted habits of vice, nor upon his deathbed make use
 of all that variety of preventing, accompanying and persevering
 grace, which God gave to man in mercy; because man would need
 it all, because without it he could not be saved; nor upon his death-
 bed can he exercise the duty of mortification; nor cure his drun-
 kennesse then, nor his lust, by an act of Christian discipliue; nor
 B run with patience; nor resist unto blood nor endure with long
 sufferance; but he can pray, and groan, and call to God, and re-
 solve to live well when he is dying; but this is but just as the
 Nobles of Xerxes, when in a storm they were to lighten the ship
 to preserve their Kings life, they did προσκυλῶντας ἑπιπιδὼν εἰς τὴνθάλασσαν
 they did their obeylence, and leaped into the sea: so (I fear) doe
 these men, pray and mourn and worship and so leap overboard into
 an ocean of eternal and intolerable calamity. From which God deli-
 ver us, and all faithful people.

C *Hunc volo laudari qui sine morte potest.*
 Mart. ep. l. 1.

*Vivere quod propero pauper, inutilis annis
 Da veniam, properat vivere nemo satis.
 Differat hoc, patrios optat qui vincere census
 Atriaq; immodicis arctat at imaginibus.*
 Mart. l. 2. ep. 90.

D

Serm.

E



Sermon. VII.

THE

DECEITFULNESSE

Of the

HEART.

17. Jeremy 9.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Holly and subtiltie divide the greatest part of mankinde, and there is no other difference but this, that some are crafty enough to deceive; Others foolish enough to be cozened and abused: And yet the scales also turn, for they that are the most craftie to cozen others, are the veriest Fools, and most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his mony, and lose their own innocency; they disturbe his rest, and vex their own Conscience; they throw him into prison, and themselves into Hell; they make poverty to be their brothers portion, and damnation to be their own. Man entred into the world first alone; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him; The Serpent, and Eve, and himself, all joyned; first to make him a foole, and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable.

But

A But he first cozened himself, giving himself up to believe a lie, and being desirous to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, he sinned, before he fell, that is, he had within him a false understanding, and a depraved will, and these were the Parents of his disobedience, and this was the parent of his infelicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entered for himself and his posterity into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easie, wilfull, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so, that if no body else will abuse him, he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles, being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and Sensuality, doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of Man, in the rudenesses and first lines of its visage, seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed.

B For a man is helpless and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a raisin is able to kill him; any trooper out of the Egyptian army, a flie can do it, when it goes on Gods errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every future contingencie, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is compass'd with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable; what shall this poor helpless thing do? trust in God? Him he hath offended, and he fears him as an enemy; and God knows, if we look onely on our selves, and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he rely upon Princes? God help poor Kings: they rely upon their Subjects, they fight with their swords, levie forces with their money, consult with their Councils, hear with their ears, and are strong onely in their union, and many times they use all these things against them; but however, they can do nothing without them while they live, and yet if ever they can die they are not to be trusted to. Now Kings and Princes die so sadly and notoriously; that it was used for a Proverbe in holy Scripture, *ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes*. Who then shall we trust in? in our Friend? Poor man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten; he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself: he gives thee counsel to chuse a wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to chuse his religion: he counsels thee to abstain from a duel, and yet slayes his own soul with drinking, like a person voyd of all understanding he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very carelesse of his own: for hee does highly despise to betray or to be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is false to God, and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune; but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we relie upon our Patron, like the Roman Clients, who waited hourly upon their persons, and daily upon their baskets, and nightly upon their lusts, and married their

SERM. VII

their friendships, and contracted also their hatred and quarrels; This is a confidence will deceive us. For they may lay us by, justly or unjustly, they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change, or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burthensom in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer then their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance; and indeed generally it is so in all the instances of men: We have a friend that is wise; but I need not his counsel, but his meat; or my Patron is bountifull in his largesses, but I am troubled with a sad spirit; and money and presents do me no more ease, then perfumes do to a broken arm: we seek life of a Physitian that dies, and go to him for health, who cannot cure his own breath, or gowt; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, impatient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandering and wilde, without counsel, and without remedy. At last after the insatuating and deceiving all our confidences without, we have nothing left us, but to return home, and dwell within our selves: for we have a sufficient stock of self-love, that we may be confident of our own affections, we may trust our selves surely; for what we want in skill, we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances: and no man understands my own case so well as I do my self, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for my self; for I am most concern'd not to abuse my self; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may best rely upon my self. Alas! and God help us! we shall find it to be no such matter: For we neither love our selves well, nor understand our own case, we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most false, perfidious creatures to our selves in the whole world: even the *Heart of a man, a mans own heart is deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* And who can chuse but know it?

And there is no greater argument of the deceitfulness of our Hearts, then this, that no man can know it all; it cosens us in the very number of its cosenage: But yet we can reduce it all to two heads. We say concerning a false man, trust him not, for he will deceive you, and we say concerning a weak and broken staffe, lean not upon it, for that will also deceive you. The man deceives, because he is false, and the staffe because it is weak, and the heart because it is both. So that it is deceitfull above all things, that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things: but in other things where it can, it is false and desperately wicked. The first sort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the second is its iniquitie, and that is the worst calamitie of the two.

i. The heart is deceitfull in its strength; and when we have the growth

A groweth of a Man, we have the weaknesse of a childe: nay more yet, and it is a sad consideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new converts, which are like to the great emissions of Lightening, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoak, from smoak to embers, from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the phantastick images of Death. And the primitive Church were zealous in their Religion up to the degree of Cherubins, and would run as greedily to the sword of the hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a Christian spirit, even to the receiving of the holy Sacrament. A man would think it reasonable that the first infancy of Christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remisse, gentle, and unactive, and that according as the object or evidence of faith grew, which in every Age hath a great degree of Argument superadded to its confirmation; so should the habit also and the grace, the longer it lasts & the more objections it runs through, it still should shew a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of miracles, still the Christian should grow more certain in his faith, more refreshed in his hope, and warm in his charity; the very nature of these graces increasing and swelling upon the very nourishment of experience, and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But indeed it is because we put on strange fire, & put out the fire upon our hearths by letting in a glaring Sun-beam, the fire of lust; or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fires of God, and suppress the sweet cloud of incense.

D The heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of it self, it cannot command its own attentions to a prayer of ten lines long; but before its end it shall wander after some thing that is to no purpose: and no wonder then that it grows weary of a holy religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual weaknesse and falsenesse of our hearts in the matters of religion, then the backwardnesse which most men have alwayes, and all men have sometimes to say their prayers: so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity; and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no wearinesse of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a blessing, and receiving it; nothing but doing our selves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest person, and greatest king of the world; and that we should be unwilling to do this, so

E unable

A when they meet their mistresse; and they are driven like a fool to the stocks, or a bul to the slaughter-house: And yet their heart deceives them; not because it cannot resist the temptation, but because it will not go about it: For it is certain, the heart can, if it list: For let a boy enter into your chamber of pleasure, and discover your folly, either your lust disbands, or your shame hides it; you will not, you dare not do it before a stranger Boy; and yet that you dare do it before the eyes of the All-seeing God, is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence, and the falseness of your heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsell as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of Temperance, as impossible: Try this once; abstain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt him with twenty pound, and he shall fast from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholesome meat. And if *Chastity* and *Temperance* be so easie, that a man may be brought to either of them with so ready and easie instruments; Let us not suffer our hearts to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences, and the strength of its desires: For we do more for a Boy, then for God; and for 20. pound, then Heaven it self.

C But thus it is in every thing else; take an Heretick, a Rebel, a person that hath an ill cause to manage; what he wants in the strength of his reason, he shall make it up with diligence; and a person that hath Right on his side is cold, indiligent, lazie, and unactive, trusting that the goodness of his Cause will do it alone; But so, wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous in a Bad matter, and others are remisse in a Good; And the same person shall be very industrious alwayes when he hath least reason so to be. That is the first particular. The heart is deceitfull in the managing of its naturall strengths; it is Naturally and Physically strong, but Morally weak, and impotent.

D 2. The heart of man is deceitfull in making judgement concerning its own Acts. It does not know when it is pleased, or displeased, it is peevish and trifling, it would and it would not, and it is in many Cases impossible to know whether a mans heart desires such a thing or not. Saint *Ambrose* hath an odde saying, *Facilius inveneris innocentem, quam qui penitentiam digne egerit.* It is easier to finde a man that lived innocently, then one that hath truly repented him, with a grief and care great, according to the merit of his sins. Now suppose a man that hath spent his younger yeers in vanity and folly; and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober counsels, this man will finde his heart so false, so subtil and fugitive, so secret and undiscernable, that it will be very hard to discern, whether he repents, or no. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore

SER. VII. repents; Alas! he so hates it, that he dares not, if he be wise, A
tempt himself with an opportunity to act it: for in the midst of
that which he calls hatred, he hath so much love left for it, that
if the sin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kis-
ses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why else should it be
necessary for us to pray, that *we be not led into temptation*? but
because we hate the sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and
yet follow it; we are angry at our selves, and yet cannot be with-
out it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant; And when
we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord upon our sins, yet
we are kinde-hearted, and spare the *Aug.* the reigning sin, the splen- B
did temptation, we have some kindneses left towards it.

These are but ill signes. How then shall I know by some infal-
lible token, that I am a true Penitent? What and if I weep for
my sins? will you not then give me leave to conclude my heart
right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so. But there
are some friends that weep at parting; and is not thy weeping a sor-
row of affection? It is a sad thing to part with our long companion.
Or it may be thou weepst, because thou wouldest have a signe to
cozen thy self withall; for some men are more desirous to have a
signe, then the thing signified; they would do something to shew C
their Repentance, that themselves may beleeve themselves to be
Penitents, having no reason from within to beleeve so. And I have
seen some persons weep heartily for the losse of six pence, or for
the breaking of a glasse, or at some trifling accident; and they
that do so cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate
then they will confesse their passion to be when they weep, and
are vexed for the during of their linnen, or some such trifle, for
which the least passion is too big an expence. So that a man can-
not tell his own heart by his tears, or the truth of his repentance
by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? Shall we suppose a D
man to pray against his sin? So did Saint Austin, when in his youth
he was tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and
secretly desired that God would not heare him: for here the heart
is cunning to deceive it self. For no man did ever heartily pray
against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any
sence or degree listen to the temptation: For to pray against a sin,
is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any
love, or any kindenesse to it. We pray against it, and yet do it, and
then pray again, and do it again; and we desire it, and yet pray
against the desires, and thats almost a contradiction: Now because E
no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or choose
against his own desires; it is plain that we cannot know whether
we mean what we say, when we pray against sin, but by the event;
If we never act it, never entertain it, alwayes resist it, ever fight
against it; and finally do prevail; then at length we may judge our
own

A own heart to have meant honestly in that one particular.

Nay our heart is so deceitfull in this matter of Repentance, that the Masters of spirituall life are faine to invent suppletorie Arts and stratagems to secure the duty. And we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn, to be sorrowfull because we are not sorrowfull. Now if we be sorrowfull in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? Is our heart so secret to our selves? But if we be not sorrowfull in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it in the second period? For we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second, or reflex act of sorrow, as of the first and direct action. And therefore we may also as well be sorrowfull the third time for want of the just measure, or hearty meaning of the second sorrow, as be sorrowfull the second time for want of true sorrow at the first, and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this Artifice, if we be not certain of our naturall and hearty passion in our direct and first apprehensions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make no question of their salvation, being confident onely because they are confident; and they are so, because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extreemly timerous and fearfull. How many persons are there in the world, that say they are sure of their salvation, and yet they dare not die? And if any man pretends, that he is now sure he shall be saved, and that hee cannot fall away from grace; there is no better way to confute him, then by advising him to send for the Surgeon, and bleed to death. For what should hinder him? not the sin: for it cannot take him from Gods favour: nor the change of his condition: for he sayes, he is sure to go to a Better: why does he not then say, *like the Roman gallants when they decreed to die.* The reason is plainly this. They say they are confident, and yet are extreemly timerous; they professe to beleevé that Doctrine, and yet dare not trust it: nay they think they beleevé, but they do not; so false is a mans heart; so deceived in its own Acts; so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The heart is deceitfull in its own resolutions and purposes: for many times men make their resolutions onely in their understanding, not in their wills; they resolve it fitting to be done, not decree that they will do it; And instead of beginning to be reconciled to God, by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far onely, as to be convinced, and apt to be condemned by their own sentence.

But suppose our resolutions advanced further, and that our Will and Choices also are determined; see how our hearts deceive us. 1. We resolve against those sins that please us not, or where temptation is not present, and think by an over-acted zeal against

SER. VII. some sins to get an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be Drunk; The Company, or the discourse, or the pleasure of madnesse, or an easie nature; and a thirstie soul; something is amisse, that cannot be helped; But they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or it may be they must satisfie a beastly lust; but they will not be drunk for all the world; and hope by their Temperance to Commute for their want of Chastity: But they attend not the Craft of their secret enemy, *their Heart*: for it is not love of the vertue; if it were, they would love Vertue in all its Instances; for Chastity is as much a Vertue as Temperance, and God hates Lust as much as he hates Drunkenness. * But this sin is against my health, or it may be it is against my lust, it makes me impotent, and yet impatient, full of desire, and empty of strength. Or else I do an act of Prayer, lest my conscience become unquiet, while it is not satisfied, or cozened with some intervals of Religion: I shall think my self a damned wretch, if I do nothing for my soul; but if I do, I shall call the one sin that remains nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my Prayer is not my Religion, but my Peace, and my Pretence, and my Fallacy.

* *Virtutem unam si amis-
eris etsi amitti
non potest vir-
tus: sed si unam
confessus fueris
te non habere,
nullam te esse
habiturum an
nescis? Cicet.*

2. We resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly: I will not be drunk in the streets, but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober; Or if I be overtaken, it shall be in Civil and Gentile Company; Or it may be not so much; I will leave my intemperance and my Lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure, I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and by a fiction of imagination will represent it present and so be satisfied with a little effeminity, or phantastick pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you, as if any man can be faithfull in much, that is faithlesse in a little. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its Picture, and wears its Favour, and delights in the Fancie of it, even with the same desire, as a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him: But certainly her staring all day upon his Picture, and weeping over his Robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signes that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with their sins.

3. We resolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it aside as long as the temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world, that against every Communion renew their vows of holy living? Men, that for twenty, for thirty years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily Act; and sure enough they did beleieve themselves: And yet if a man had daily promised us a curtesie, and

A and failed us but ten times, when it was in his power to have done it, we should think, we had reason never to believe him more: And can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our hearts, which they have falsified so many hundred times? We resolve against a religious Time, because then it is the Custome of men, and the Guise of the Religion; Or we resolve when we are in a great danger, and then we promise any thing, possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us, we onely care to remove the present pressure, and when that is over, and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferencies: B Or else we cannot look a temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. *Epictetus* tells us of a Gentleman returning from banishment, in his journey towards home called at his house, told a sad story of an Imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent, he was resolved for the future to live Philosophically, and entertain no business, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the Court, not to salute Cæsar with ambitious attendancies, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly, when nature, or necessity called him. It may be this man believed himself, but *Epictetus* did not. And he had reason. For C *ἀντίστοιχον αὐτῷ παρὰ Καίσαρος τιμὰν δέει.* Letters from Cæsar met him at the doors, and invited him to Court, and he forgot all his promises, which were warm upon his lips, and grew pompous, secular, and ambitious, and gave the gods thanks for his preferment. Thus many men leave the world, when their fortune hath left them, and they are severe and philosophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return: But let a prosperous Sunshine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation; Their own false heart is enough; they are like Ephraim in the day of Battel, starting aside like a broken Bow. D

4. The heart is false, deceiving and deceived in its intentions and designs. A man hears the precepts of God injoyning us to give Alms of all we possess; he readily obeys with much cheerfulness and alacrity; And his charity, like a fair spreading tree, looks beautifully: But there is a canker at the heart; The man blowes a Trumpet to call the poor together, and hopes the neighbourhood will take notice of his Bounty. Nay he gives Alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes by some E Accident or other to be praised both for his Charity and Humility. And if by chance, the Fame of his Alms comes abroad, it is but his duty to let his light shine before men, that God may be glorified, and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified, But then to distinguish the intention of our heart in this

SEAM, VII. Instance, and to seek Gods glory in a particular, which will also
 conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence
 to stick to the heart, no reflexion upon our selves, or no compla-
 cency and delight in popular noyses, is the nicety of abstraction,
 and requires an Angel to do it. Some men are so kind-hearted, so
 true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans,
 and receive his last breath, and close his eyes; And if this be done
 with honest intention, it is well: but there are some that do so,
 and yet are vultures and harpyes, they watch for the Carcasse,
 and prey upon a Legacy. A man with a true story may be malici-
 ous to his enemy, and by doing himself right, may also do him
 wrong: And so false is the heart of man, so clancular and contra-
 dictory are its Actions and Intentions, that some men pursue vertue
 with great earnestnesse, and yet cannot with patience look upon it
 in another: It is Beauty in Themselves, and Deformity in the
 Other. Is it not plain, that not the Vertue, but its Reputation is
 the thing that is pursued? And yet if you tell the man so, he thinks
 he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is
 able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment? when
 from fear of punishment we are brought to fear God: And yet the
 difference must be distinguishable in new Converts & old Disciples;
 And our fear of punishment must so often change its Circumstan-
 ces, that it must be at last a fear to offend out of pure Love, and
 must have no formality left to distinguish it from Charity: It is
 easie to distinguish these things in Precepts, and to make the sepa-
 ration in the Schooles: The Head can do it easily, and the Tongue
 can do it: But when the heart comes to separate Alms from Charity,
 Gods glory from Humane praise, fear from fear, and sincerity from
 Hypocrisie; it does so intricate the questions and confound the ends,
 and blende and entangle circumstances, that a man hath reason to
 doubt, that his very best Actions are sullied with some unhandsom
 excrescency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but
 always to be imperfect.

Here a man would think were enough to abate our confidence, and
 the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand upon his
 guard, and to keep a strict watch upon his own heart, as upon his
 greatest enemy from without. *Custodi, libera me de mespso, Deus.* It
 was S. Augustines prayer, Lord keep me, Lord deliver me from my
 self. If God will keep a man, that he be not *Felo de se*, that he lay
 no violent hands upon himself, it is certain nothing else can do him
 mischief. *ἐν τῷ ὄντι, ἐν τῷ μαίῃ, ἐν τῷ ἑλπίῃ*, as Agamemnon said, Neither
 Jupiter, nor Destinies, nor the Furies, but it is a mans self that
 does him the mischief. The Devil can but Tempt, and offer a dag-
 ger at the heart, unlesse our hands thrust it home, the Devil can
 do nothing, but what may turn to our advantage. And in this
 sence we are to understand the two seeming Contradictories in
 Scripture,

A Scripture, *Pray that ye enter not into Temptation*, said our Blessed Saviour, and *Counts it all joy when you enter into divers Temptations*, said one of Christs Disciples. The case is easie. When God suffers us to be tempted, he means it but as a trial of our faith, as the exercise of our vertues, as the opportunity of reward, and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy; since the *Trial of our faith worketh Patience*, and *Patience experience*, and *experience causeth hope*, and *hope maketh not ashamed*: But yet for all this, *pray against temptations*: for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blinde men do their clubs, neither distinguish person nor part; as soon they strike the face of their friends as the back of the Enemy; our hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty, and to give advantages to the Devil. He, that uses a temptation thus, hath reason to pray against it; and yet our hearts does all this and a thousand times more, so that we may engrave upon our hearts the epitaph which was digged into Thiestes grave-stone.

Nolite, inquit, hospites adire ad me, illico iste;

Ne contagio mea umbrave obfit,

C *Tansa vis sceleris in corpore haret.*

There is so much falsenesse and iniquity in mans heart, that it defiles all the members; it makes the eyes lustful, and the tongue slanderous; it fills the head with mischief, and the feet with blood, and the hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternall misery. But this is but the beginning of those throws, and damnable impieties, which proceed out of the heart of man, and defile the whole constitution. I have yet told but the weaknesse of the heart; I shall the next time tell you the iniquities, those inherent Divels which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make it desperately wicked, that is, wicked beyond all expression.

The

E

The deceitfulness of the Heart.

Part II.

Epist.
Arrist.

2. **A** *Ἡ φιλοσοφία -- συναισθησις τὸ αὐτὸ ἀδυνάτεια, καὶ ἀδυναμία καὶ τὸ ἀναγκάζει :*
It is the beginning of wisdom, to know a mans own
weaknesses, and failings in things of greatest necessitie;
and we have here so many objects to furnish out this knowledge,
that we finde it with the longest and latest before it be obtained. A
man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is
well stricken in death: A mans heart at first being like a plain table,
unspotted indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it. As
soon as ever we ripen towards the imperfect uses of our reason, we
write upon this table such crooked characters, such imperfect confi-
gurations, so many fooleries; and stain it with so many blots, and
vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our
hearts for a great while; and when education and ripeness, reason
and experience, Christian philosophy and the grace of God hath
made fair impressions and written the law in our hearts with the fin-
ger of Gods holy spirit, we blot out this hand-writing of Gods ordi-
nances, or mingle it with false principles, & interlinings of our own;
we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God; either
we make the rule uneven, we bribe or abuse our guide, that we may
wander with an excuse. Or if nothing else will do it, we turn head
and professe to go against the lawes of God. Our Hearts are blinde;
or our hearts are hardened: for these are two great arguments of the
wickedness of our hearts: they do not see, or they will not see the
wayes of God; or if they do, they make use of their seeing, that they
may avoid them.

- I 1. Our hearts are blinde, wilfully blinde. I need not instance
in the ignorance and involuntary nescience of men, though if we
speak of the necessary parts of religion, no man is ignorant of them
without his own fault: such ignorance is alwayes a direct sin, or the
direct punishment of a sin. A sin is either in its bosom, or in its reti-
nue: But the ignorance, that I now intend, is a voluntary, cho-
sen, delightful ignorance, taken in upon designe; even for no
other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly.
God hath opened all the windows of Heaven, and sent
the Sun of Righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath dis-
cover'd

A covered the abysses of his own wisdom, made the second Person in the Trinity, to be the doctor and preacher of his sentences & secrets, and the third Person to be his Amanuensis or scribe, and our hearts to be the Book in which the Doctrine is written, and Miracles, and Prophecies to be its Arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it: and those leaves contain within their folds all that excellent morality which right reason pickt up after the shipwreck of nature; and all those wise sayings, which singly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of Revelation: So that now the wisdom of God hath made every mans heart to be the true Veronica, in which he hath imprinted his own lineaments so perfectly, that we may dresse our selves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our Elder-Brother; that we may be pure as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wisdom and holinesse. This hath God done for us; and see what we do for Him. We stand in our own light, and quench Gods: we love darknesse more then light, and entertain our selves accordingly. For how many of us are there, that understand nothing of the wayes of God; that know no more of the lawes of Jesus Christ, then is remaining upon them since they learned the childrens Catechisme? But amongst a thousand how many can explicate and unfold for his own practise the ten Commandements; And how many sorts of sins are there forbidden? which therefore passe into action, and never passe under the scrutinies of repentance; because they know not that they are sins? Are there not very many, who know not the particular duties of meeknesse, and never consider concerning Long suffering? and if you talk to them of growth in Grace, or the spirit of obsequation, or the melancholy lectures of the Crosse, and imitation of, and conformitie to Christs sufferings; or adherences to God, or rejoycing in him, or not quenching the spirit; you are too deep learned for them. And yet these are duties set down plainly for our practise, necessary to be acted in order to our Salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fulnesse of the Spirit: In the mean time we understand not many parts of our dutie. We enquire into something that may make us talk, or be talked of, or that we may trouble a Church, or disturb the peace of mindes; but in things that concern Holy living, and that wisdom of God, whereby we are wise unto Salvation: never was any age of Christendom more ignorant then we. For, if we did not wink hard we must needs see, that obedience to Supreme Powers, Denying of our selves, Humility, Peacefulnesse, and Charity, are written in such Capital Text letters, that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the understanding, it were not to be imagined that any man should bring

SER. VIII. bring the 13. Chapter to the Romans to prove the lawfulness of A
 taking up Arms against our Rulers: but so we may abuse our selves
 at noon, and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there
 have been a sort of witty men that maintained that snow was hot:
 I wonder not at the Probleme; but that a man should beleve his
 Paradox, and should let eternity go away with the fallacie, and ra-
 ther lose heaven then leave his foolish argument, is a signe that wil-
 fulnesse and the deceiving heart is the Sophister, and the great ingre-
 dient into our Deception.

But that I may be more particular; the heart of man uses devices
 that it may be ignorant.

1. We are impatient of honest and severe reproof; and order the B
 circumstances of our persons and addressees, that we shall never come
 to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear
 his Curate tell him that he is covetous, or that he is proud? *Αἰσχος, ὃ*
δενδρὸν ἔσπειρε. It is Calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his Head, and
 relates to his person: and yet if he speak onely in generall, every
 man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet
 if our Physician tell us, you look well, Sir: but a Fever lurks in
 your spirits, *Ἀσθενεῖς, σπυλαὶν ἔσπειρε.* drink Julips and abstain from
 flesh; no man thinks it shame or calumny to be told so: but when C
 we are told that our liver is inflamed with lust or anger; that our
 heart is vexed with envie; that our eyes rowl with wantonnesse;
 And though we think all is well, yet we are sick, sick unto death,
 and neer to a sad and fatall sentence: we shall think that man that tells
 us so is impudent, or uncharitable; and yet he hath done him no
 more injury, then a deformed man receives daily from his looking-
 glasse; which if he shall dash against the wall, because it shewes
 him his face just as it is; his face is not so ugly as his manners. And
 yet our heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains, that like the
 Elephant, it tramples in the pure streams, and first troubles D
 them, then stoops and drinks, when he can least see his huge de-
 formity.

2. In order to this, we heap up teachers of our own, and they
 guide us, not *whither*, but *which way* they please: for we are curi-
 ous to go our own way, and careless of our Hospitall or lone
 at night. A fair way and a merry company, and a pleasant easie
 guide will entice us into the Enemies quarters; and such guides we
 cannot want; *Improbis occisso nunquam defuit.* If we have a
 minde to be wicked, we shall want no prompters; and false teach-
 ers at first creeping in unawares have now so filled the pavement of E
 the Church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground, but you
 tread upon a snake. *Cicero l. 7. ad Atticum*, undertakes to bargain
 with them that kept the Sybils books, that for a sum of money they
 shall expound to him what he please; and to be sure, *ut quidvis po-*
tius, quam Regem praeferrent. They shall declare against the govern-
 ment

A ment of Kings, and say, that the Gods will endure any thing rather than monarchy in their beloved republick. And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews; the Prophets propheticie lies, and my people love to have it so: and what will the end of these things be? even the same that Cicero complain'd of, *Ad opinionem imperitorum fictas esse Religiones*. Men shall have what Religion they please, and God shall be intitled to all the quarrels of covetous and Ambitious persons, *ὡς πῶς διὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων* as Demosthenes wittily complained of the Oracle, An answer shall be drawn out of Scripture to countenance the designe, and God made the Rebel against his own Ordinances. And then we are zealous for the Lord God of Hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall set all the rest on working? The heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of reason, then remove the Landmark, and dig down the causewayes, and then either hire a blinde guide, or make him so: and all these Arts to get ignorance, that they may secure impiety. At first, man lost his innocence onely in hope to get a little knowledge: and ever since then lest knowledge should discover his error, and make him return to innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins, or discompose our secular designe. And as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise Religion, and sent his spirit to give the gift of Faith to his Church, that upon the foundation of Faith he might build a holy life: now our hearts love to retire into Blindnesse, and sneak under the covert of False principles, and run to a cheap religion, and an unactive discipline, and make a faith of our own, that we may build upon it ease and ambition and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a minde to; scarce once in seven yeers denying a strong and an unruly appetite upon the interest of a just conscience and holy religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety; so certain arts and apt instruments for the Devil; that it does his work intirely, and produces an infallible damnation.

3. But the heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of ignorance; and that is, Incogitancy or Inconsideration. For there is wrought upon the spirits of many men great impression by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by humane Laws, and the customes and severities of sober persons, and the fears of religion, and the awfullnesse of a reverend man, and the severall arguments and endearments of vertue: And it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of reason, and Religion, and arguments, and Reverence, and modesty, and fear; But men are forced from their sin by the violence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman Gentleman kept off a whole band of souldiers, who were sent to murder him; and his

SER. VIII.

his eloquence was stronger then their anger and designe: But suddenly a rude trooper rushed upon him, who neither had, nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat, whose musick had charmed all his fellows in peace and gentlenesse. So do we. The grace of God is Armour and defence enough against the most violent incursion of the spirits, and the works of darknesse, but then we must hear its excellent charms, and consider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to uncleannesse, or to an act of oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me, that the pleasure of the sin is transient, and vain, unsatisfying and empty; That I shall die; and then I shall wish too late, that I had never done it. It tells me that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me. It represents to me all the joyes of Heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a sad eternity. And if I will stay and heare them, ten thousand excellent things besides, fit to be twisted about my understanding for ever. But here the heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but by a meer wildenesse of purpose and rudenesse of resolution ventures *super totam materiam*, at all, and does the thing, not because it thinks it fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or no: it is enough that it pleases a pleasant appetite, and if such incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men (first by resisting the motions of the holy spirit, then by quenching him,) we shall finde the consequents to be, first an *Indifference*, then a *dulnesse*, then a *Lethargie*, then a direct *Hating* the wayes of God; and it commonly ends in a *wretchlessnesse of spirit* to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall passe hence not *like the shadow*, but like the dog, *that departeth*, without sense or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment in the considerations of eternity: and 'tis but just, *when we will not heare our King speak and plead*, not to save himself, but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency and Salvation, to prevent our ruine, and our intolerable calamity: certainly we are much in love with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back; and stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charme he never so wisely.

Nay further yet; we suffer the Arguments of Religion to have so little impression upon our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of childhood, or the Problems of uncertain Philosophy: A man talks of Religion but as of a dream, and from thence he awakens into the Businesse of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect Action and full Resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them: But when he falls asleep again, or is taken from the Scene of his own employment and choice; then

A then he dreams again, and Religion makes such Impressions as is the conversation of a Dreamer, and he acts accordingly. *Theodorus* tells of a Fisherman that dreamed he had taken a *Salmon*, and upon a Fish of Gold, upon which being over-joyed he made a vow, that he would never fish more: But when he waked, he soon declared his vow to be null, because he found his golden Fish was escaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purposes of Religion; sometimes in a good mood we seem to see Heaven opened, and all the streets of Heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low affections of the world, and the impure adherencies of sin, but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the Inclinations, and habitually desires of our false hearts, those other desires and fine considerations disband, and the Resolutions taken in that pious fit melt into Indifferency, and old Customes. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who having used to put his trust in Dreams, one night dreamed, that all dreams were vain; For he considered, If so, then This was vain, and then dreams might be true for all this: But if they might be true, then this dream might be so upon equall reason; And then dreams were vain, because This dream, which told him so, was true, and so round again. In the same circle runs the Heart of man; All his cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especiall use of this, that, that Thought which thinks so, That is vain; and if That be vain, then his other Thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be Reall, and Relied upon; And so we do. Those religious thoughts, which are sent into us, to condemne and disrepute the thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the onely dreams; And so all those Instruments, which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of Impiety, are rendered ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or (which happens most commonly) by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, That we are ignorant of the things of God; we make Religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole yeer; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of holy Living: we reduce Religion to the Believing of a few Articles, and doing nothing that is considerable: we Pray seldom, and then but very coldly and indifferently: we Communicate not so often as the Sun salutes both the Tropicks: we profess Christ, but dare not die for him: we are factious for a Religion, and will not live according to its precepts: we call our selves Christians, and love to be ignorant of many of the lawes of Christ: lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a holy Life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a furious inconsiderate person, running after the wilde-fires of

How

I

the

SER. VIII.

the night, over Rivers and Rocks, and Precipices without Sun or Starre, or Angel or Man to guide him: All that, and ten thousand times worse may you suppose to be the certain Lot of him, who gives himself up to the conduct of a passionate blinde Heart, whom no fire can warm, and no Sun enlighten; who hates light and loves to dwell in the Regions of darknesse. That's the first generall mischief of the Heart: It is possessed with Blindenesse, willfull and voluntary.

2

2. But the Heart is *Hard* too. Not onely Folly, but Mischief also is bound up in the Heart of man. If God strives to soften it with sorrow and sad Accidents, it is like an Ox, it grows callous, and hard. Such a heart was *Pharaohs*. When God makes the clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the clouds, and like the male-contents in Calba's time, *Tristitiam simulamus Contumacia propiores*. We seem sad and troubled, but it is doggednesse and murmur. Or else if our fears be pregnant, and the heart yeelding, it sinks low into pusillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so impatient in a sadnesse, that God is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet when the Sun shines upon us, our hearts are hardened with that too, and God seems to be at a losse, as if he knew not what to do to us. Warre undoes us and makes us violent. Peace undoes us and makes us wanton. Prosperity makes us Proud, Adversity renders us Impatient. Plenty dissolves us and makes us Tyrants, Want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious.

Aristoph:

Barga:

Act. 5. Scen. 4.

Πῶς ἐν τῇ ἀνθρώπου καρδίᾳ
ἢ μὴτε χλῆνα, μὴτε σίδηρον ἐξυμῶμεν;

No fortune can save that City to whom neither Peace nor Warr can do advantage. And what is there left for God to mollifie our hearts, whose temper is like both to wax and durt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens; and contradictory Accidents produce no change, save that the heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of Providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

1. The Heart of man is strangely Proud; If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish our selves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not, or envious and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then *Vox populi, vox Dei*. Fame is the voice of God. If we be praised but by few, then *Satie unus, satis nullus*. We cry, these are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the People. But if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of no body, and think well

A well onely of ourselves: And then we have such beggerly Arts, such tricks to cheat for praise; we enquire after our faults and failings onely to be told we have none, but did excellently, and then wee are pleased; wee rail upon our Actions onely to be chidden for so doing; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of ourselves; which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, Humilitie it self makes us proud; so false, so base is the Heart of man. For Humility is so noble a Vertue, that even Pride it self puts on its upper Garment; And we do like those, who cannot endure to look upon an Ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigie. And *Aesops* picture was sold for two talents; when himself was made a slave at the price of two Philippicks. And because Humility makes a man to be honoured; Therefore we imitate all its Garbs and Postures, its civilities and silence, its modesties and condescensions. And to prove that we are extremely proud in the midst of all this pagentry, we should be extremely angry at any man, that should say we are proud; And that's a sure signe we are so. And in the middest of all our Arts to seem Humble, we use devices to bring our selves into talk; we thrust our selves into company, we listen at doors, and like the great Beards in Rome, that pretended Philosophie and strict life, *Ὁς ἐλίσκοι κατὰ πόδας εἰσιπῶμεν*, We walk by the Obelisk, and meditate in Piazza's, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may crie out, *ὁ μέγας φιλόσοφος*; Behold! there goes an excellent man! He is very prudent, or very learned, or a charitable person, or a good housekeeper, or at least very Humble.

The Heart of man is deeply in love with wickednesse, and with nothing else: Against, not onely the Lawes of God, but against his own Reason, its own Interest, and its own Securities. For is it imaginable, that a man who knows the Lawes of God; the rewards of Vertue, the cursed and horrid effects of sin; that knows and considers, and deeply sighes at the thought of the intolerable pains of Hell; that knows the joys of Heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for; And yet he certainly beleeves, that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither; Is it I say imaginable, that this man should for a transient Action forfeit all this Hope, and certainly and knowing incur all that calamity? Yea, but the sin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and blood, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; And the discourses of Religion are concerning things spiritual, separate and apt for spirits, Angels, and souls departed. To take off this also; We will suppose the man to consider, and really to beleve that the pleasure of the sinne, is sudden, vain, empty, and transient;

SER. VIII. transient; that it leaves bitterneſſe upon the tongue, before it is
 A
 deſcended into the bowels; that there it is poiſon, and makes the
 Belly to ſwell, and the Thigh to rot; That hee remembers and
 actually conſiders, that as ſoon as the moment of ſin is paſt, he
 ſhall have an intolerable Conſcience; and does at the inſtant com-
 pare moments with Eternitie, and with honour remembers that
 the very next minute he is as miſerable a man as is in the world;
 Yet that this man ſhould ſin? Nay, ſuppoſe the ſin to have no plea-
 ſure at all, ſuch as is the ſin of ſwearing; Nay, ſuppoſe it really
 to have pain in it: ſuch as is the ſin of Envie, which never can have
 pleaſure in its actions, but much torment and conſumption of the
 B
 very heart: What ſhould make this man ſin ſo for nothing, ſo a-
 gainſt himſelf, ſo againſt all Reaſon, and Religion, and Intereſt,
 without pleaſure, for no reward? Here the heart betrayes it ſelf to
 be deſperately wicked. What man can give a reaſonable account
 of ſuch a man, who to proſecute his revenge will do himſelf an
 injury, that he may do a leſſe to him that troubles him. Such a man
 hath given me ill language; *ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ κεφαλὴ ἀλγεί, ἐπεὶ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς, ἐπεὶ τὸ*
ἰχίον, ἐπεὶ ὁ ἄγρον ἀπώλεται; My head akes not for his language, nor hath
 he broken my thigh, nor carried away my land. But yet this man
 muſt be requited. Well, ſuppoſe that. But then let it be proporti-
 C
 onable; you are not undone, let not him be ſo. Oh yes; for elſe
 my revenge triumphs not. Well, if you do, yet remember he will
 defend himſelf, or the Law will right him; at leaſt do not do wrong
 to your ſelf by doing him wrong. This were but Prudence, and
 Self-intereſt. And yet we ſee, that the heart of ſome men hath be-
 trayed them to ſuch furiousneſſe of Appetite, as to make them
 willing to die, that their enemy may be buried in the ſame Ruines.
 Jovius Pontanus tells of an Italian ſlave (I think) who being en-
 raged againſt his Lord, watched his abſence from home, and the
 employment and inadvertency of his fellow-ſervants: he locked
 D
 the doors, and ſecured himſelf for a while, and Ravished his
 Lady; then took her three ſons up to the battlements of the houſe,
 and at the return of his Lord, threw one down to him upon the
 pavement, and then a ſecond, to rend the heart of their ſad Father,
 ſeeing them weltring in their blood and brains. The Lord beg'd for
 his third, and now his onely Son, promiſing pardon and libertie,
 if he would ſpare his life. The ſlave ſeemed to bend a little, and
 on condition his Lord would cut off his own Noſe, hee would
 ſpare his Son. The ſad Father did ſo, being willing to ſuffer any
 thing, rather than the loſſe of that Childe; But as ſoon as he ſaw
 E
 his Lord all bloody with his wound, he threw the third Son, and
 himſelf down together upon the pavement. The ſtory is ſad
 enough, and needs no luſtre and advantages of ſorrow to repreſent
 it: But if a man ſets himſelf down, and conſiders ſadly, he cannot
 eaſily tell upon what ſufficient inducement, or what principle the
 ſlave

A slave should so certainly, so horridly, so presently, and then so eternally ruine himself. What could he propound to himself as a recompence to his own so immediate Tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him; we must confesse our ignorance, and say, that The Heart of man is desperately wicked; and that is the truth in generall, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.

B For when the heart of man is bound up by the grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by Angels, tended by those Nurse-keepers of the soul; it is not easie for a man to wander: And the evil of his heart is but like the ferity and wildenesse of Lyons-whelps: But when once we have broken the hedge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the licentiousnesse of an ungoverned age, it is wonderfull to observe, what a great inundation of mischief in a very short time will overflow all the banks of Reason and Religion. *Vice first is pleasing, then it grows easie, then delightfull, then frequent, then habituall, then confirmed, then the man is impenitent, then he is obstinate, then he resolves never to Repent, and then he is Damned.* And by that time he is come half way in this progresse, he confutes the Philosophy of the old Morallists; For they, not knowing the vilenesse of mans Heart, not considering its desperate amazing Impiety, knew no other degree of wickednesse but This, That men preferred Sense before Reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporall before an intellectuall and eternall good: But they alwayes concluded, that the Will of man must of necessity follow the last dictate of the understanding, declaring an object to be good in one sence or other. Happy men they were that were so Innocent; that knew no pure and perfect malice, and lived in an Age, in which it was not easie to confute them.

C But besides that, now the wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see by too sad experience, that there are some sins proceeding from the heart of man, which have nothing but simple, and unmingled malice; Actions of meer spite; doing evil, because it is evil; sinning without sensuall pleasures: sinning with sensuall pain, with hazard of our lives: with actuall torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and precept damnation: sins against the Holy Ghost: open hostilities, and professed enmities against God and all vertue. I can go no further: because there is not in the world, or in the nature of things, a greater Evil.

D And that is the Nature and Folly of the Devil: he tempts men to ruine, and hates God, and onely hurts himself, and those he tempts: and does himself no pleasure, and some say, he increases his own accidentall torment.

E Although I can say nothing greater: yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me to represent the

Falsenesse

SER. VIII. Falsenesse and basenesse of the Heart. 1. We are false our selves, and dare not trust God, 2. We love to be deceived, and are angry, if we be told so. 3. We love to seem vertuous, and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholy and impatient, and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things, and are carelesse of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternall pleasures. 7. We beleeeve things, not for their Reasons and proper Arguments; but as they serve our turns, be they true or false. 8. We long extreemly for things that are forbidden us; And what we despise, when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily, when it is taken from us. 9. We love our selves more then we love God; and yet we eat poysons daily, and feed upon Toads and Vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosome, and will not be brought to quit them; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing, but Vertue, which is most honourable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all means we can to make Death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busie in the faults of others, and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown our selves. 13. We worship and flatter some men, and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of Greatnesse, and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it, is, that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of Clients run to us, as to a Pool, whom first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make our selves unsafe by committing wickednesse, and then we adde more wickednesse to make us safe, and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one curtesey, that we hope for, then for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain slanderers, and without choice spread their calumnies; and we hugg flatterers, and know they abuse us: And if I should gather the abuses, and impieties, and deceptions of the Heart, as *Chrysippus* did the oracular Lies of *Apollo* into a Table; I fear they would seem Remediable, and beyond the cure of watchfulnesse and Religion. Indeed they are Great and Many: But the Grace of God is Greater; and if Iniquity abounds, then doth Grace superabound, and thats our Comfort and our Medicine, which we must thus use.

1. Let us watch our hearts at every turn.
2. Deny it all its Desires, that do not directly or by consequence end in godlinesse: At no hand be indulgent to its fondnesse, and peevish appetites.
3. Let us suspect it as an Enemy.
4. Trust not to it in any thing.
5. But beg the grace of God with perpetuall and importunate prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils, and that he would throw the salutary wood of the Crosse, the merits

A rits of Christs death and passion, into these salt waters, and make them healthfull and pleasant.

B And in order to the mannaging these advises, and acting the purposes of this prayer; let us strictly follow a rule; and choose a Prudent and faithful guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and *prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths streight*, apt and imitable. For without great watchfulnesse, and earnest devotion, and a prudent Guide, we shall finde that true in a spiritual sense, which Plutarch affirmed of a mans body in the natural; that of dead Buls arise Bees; from the carcases of horses, hornets are produced; But the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions, will produce nothing but issues of Hell, and images of *the old serpent the diuel*, for whom is provided *the everlasting burning*.

C



D

E

Serm-



Sermon. IX.

THE FAITH and PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS:

OR

The righteous cause oppressed.

1 Peter 4. 17. 18.

For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?

18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

SO long as the world lived by sense, and discourses of natural reason, as they were abated with humane infirmities, and not at all heightened by the spirit and divine revelations; So long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate: and amongst the basest and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was profitable: and he only wise that was rich; and that man beloved of God, who received from him all that might satisfy their lust, their ambition, or their revenge:

Fatis

*Estis accede deisque
& cole felices, miseros, fuge sidera terra
ut distant & flamma mari, sic utile recto.*

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to vertue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile Vertue and Misery, then to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their reason with a little beam of faith, or else heightened their reason by wiser principles then those of vulgar understandings; and taught them in the clear glasse of faith, or the dim perspective of Philosophie, to look beyond the cloud, and there to spie that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of heaven and the waters of affliction. And according as the world grew more enlightened by faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and sorrows: God sometimes sent a light of fire, and pillar of a cloud, and the brightnesse of an Angel, and the lustre of a star, and the sacrament of a rainbowe to guide his people thorow their portion of sorrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: But as the Sun of righteousness approached towards the chambers of the East, and sent the harbingers of light peeping through the curtaines of the night, and leading on the day of faith and brightest revelation: so God sent degrees of trouble upon wise and good men, that now in the same degree in the which the world *lives by faith*, and not by sense, in the same degree they might be able to live in vertue even while she lived in trouble, and not reject so great a beauty because she goes in mourning, and hath a black cloud of cypresse drawn before her face: literally thus; God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant world by temporal prosperity; but by degrees changed his method; and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God, and the expectations of heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their enemies, and were to endure the *contradiction of sinners*, and the immision of the sharpnesses of Providence and Divine Oeconomy.

First, Adam was placed in a Garden of health and pleasure, from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of *natural sorrows*, which he and all his posterity till the flood runne thorough: but in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them, they need not fight for Empires, or places for their cattle to graze in; they lived long and felt no want, no slavery, no tyrannie, no war: and the evils that happened were *single, personal*, and *natural*, and no violences were then done, but they were

SERM. IX

were like those things which the law calls *rare contingencies*; for which as the law can now take no care, and make no provisions, so then there was no law; but men lived *free*, and *rich*, and *long*, and they exercised no *virtues* but *naturall*, and knew no *felicity* but *natural*; and so long their prosperity was, just as was their virtue, because it was a naturall instrument towards all that which they knew of happinesse. * But this publike easinesse and quiet, the world turned into sin; and unlesse God did compel men to do themselves good they would undo themselves: and then God broke in upon them with a flood and destroyed that generation, that hee might begin the government of the world upon a new stock, and binde vertue upon mens spirits by new bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new laws and gave to Princes the power of the sword, and men might be punished to death in certain cases, & mans life was shortened, and slavery was brought into the world and the state of servants; and then war began, and evils multiplied upon the face of the earth; in which it is naturally certain, that they that are most violent and injurious prevailed upon the weaker and more innocent; and every tyrannie that began from Nimrod to this day, and every usurper was a peculiar argument to shew that God began to teach the world vertue by suffering; and that therefore he suffered *Tyrannies* and *Usurpations*, to be in the world, and to be prosperous, and the rights of men to be snatched away from the owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive vertues of the soul. For so God brings good out of evil, turning *Tyrannie* into the benefits of *Government*, and *violence* into *vertue*, and *sufferings* into *rewards*: and this was the second change of the word: *personall miseries* were brought in upon Adam and his posterity, as a punishment of sin in the first period: and in the second, *publike evils* were brought in by *tyrants* and *usurpers*, and God suffered them as the first elements of vertue. men being just newly put to school to infant sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christs line was not yet drawn forth: it began not to appear in what family the *King of sufferings* should descend till *Abrahams* time, and therefore till then there were no greater sufferings then what I have now reckoned. But when *Abrahams* family was chosen from among the many Nations, and began to belong to God, by a special right, and he was designed to be the *Father* of the *Messias*, then God found out a new way to trie him, even with a sound affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved *Isaac*; but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, & therefore was also but a type of sufferings, and excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature and accident, we see no change made, for a long while after

A after, but God having established a law in Abrahams family and
 build it upon promises, of health, and peace, and victory, and plenty,
 and riches: and so long as they did not prevaricate the law of their
 God, so long they were prosperous: but God kept a remnant of
 Canaanites in the land like a rod held over them to vex or to chastise
 them into obedience, in which while they persevered, nothing could
 hurt them; and that saying of David needs no other sence, but the
 letter of its own expression, *I have been young and now am old,*
 and yet *say I never the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging their*
 bread. The godly generally were prosperous, and a good cause sel-
 dom had an ill end, and a good man never died an ill death, till
 B the law had spent a great part of its time, and it descended towards
 its declension and period; But that the great Prince of sufferings
 might not appear upon his stage of tragedies without some fore-
 runners of sorrow, God was pleased to choose out some good men,
 and honour them, by making them to become little images of suf-
 fering; *Isaiah*, *Jeremy*, and *Zachary* were martyrs of the law; but
 these were single deaths; *Shadrac*, *Meshec*, and *Abednego* were
 thrown into a burning furnace, and *Daniel* into a den of lions, and
Safanna was accused for adultery; but these were but little arrests
 C of the prosperity of the Godly: as the time drew neerer that Christ
 should be manifest, so the sufferings grew bigger and more nume-
 rous: and *Antiochus* raised up a sharp persecution in the time of the
 Maccabees, in which many passed thorow the red sea of blood into
 the bosome of *Abraham*; and then Christ came: and that was the third
 period in which the changed method of Gods providence was perfect-
 ed: for Christ was to do his great work by sufferings, & by sufferings
 was to enter into blessednesse; and by his passion he was made prince of
 the Catholick church, and as our Head was, so must the members be:
 God made the same covenant with us, that he did with his most holy
 Son; & Christ obtain'd no better conditions for us, then for himself;
 D that was not to be looked for; *the servant must not be above his master;*
it is well if he be as his Master: if the world persecuted him, they will also
persecute us; and from the dayes of John the Baptist, the kingdome of
Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force: not the vio-
lent doers, but the sufferers of violence; for though the old law was
 established in the promises of temporal prosperity: yet the gospel
 is founded in temporal adversity. It is directly a covenant of suffer-
 ings and sorrows; for now the time is come that judgement must begin
 at the house of God: thats the sence and designe of the text; and I in-
 E tend it as a direct antinomy to the common perswasions of tyrann-
 ous, carnal, and vicious men, who reckon nothing good, but what is
 prosperous: for though that proposition had many degrees of truth in
 the beginning of the Law, yet the case is now altered; God hath
 established its contradictory: and now every good man must look
 for persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by
 the

SERM. IX.

the sufferings and patience of holy persons : and as men do well, and suffer evil, so they are dear to God : and whom he loves most, he afflicts most, and does this with a designe of the greatest mercy in the world.

Joel. 3.

Isaiah 23. 3.

1. Then, the state of the Gospel is a state of sufferings, not of temporall prosperities, this was fore-told by the prophets : *a fountain shall go out of the house of the Lord, & irrigabit torrentem spinarum* ; (so it is in the vulgar latin) and it shall water the torrent of thorns ; that is, the state or time of the Gospel : which like a torrent shall carry all the world before it, and like a torrent shall be fullest in ill weather ; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briers, sharp afflictions, temporall infelicities and persecution. This sense of the words is more fully explained in the book of the prophet Isa. *upon the ground of my people shall thorns and briers come up, how much more in all the houses of the city of rejoycing* ; which prophetic is the same in the stile of the prophets, that my text is in the stile of the Apostles : the house of God shall be watered with the dew of heaven, and there shall spring up briers in it : *judgement must begin there* : but *how much more in the houses of the city of rejoycing, how much more amongst them that are at ease in Sion* : that serve their desires, that satisfie their appetites, that are given over to their own hearts lust, that so serve themselves, that they never serve God, that dwell in the city of rejoycing : they are like Dives whose portion was in this life, *who went in fine linnen and fared deliciously every day* : they indeed trample upon their briers and thorns, and suffer them not to grow in their houses : but the roots are in the ground, and they are reserved for fuel of wrath in the day of everlasting burning. Thus you see it was prophesied, now see how it was performed : *Christ was the captain of our sufferings* and he began.

He entred into the world with all the circumstances of poverty ; he had a star to Illustrate his birth, but a stable for his bed chamber, and a manger for his cradle : the Angels sang hymns when he was born, but he was cold and cryed, uneasie and unprovided ; he lived long in the trade of a carpenter, he by whom God made the world had in his first yeers the businesse of a mean and an ignoble trade ; he did good where ever he went, and almost where ever he went was abused ; he deserved heaven for his obedience, but found a crosse in his way thither ; and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in lap of ease, softnesse and a prosperous fortune, he it was onely that could deserve that, or any thing that can be good. But after he had chosen to live a life of vertue, of poverty, and labour, he entred into a state of death ; whose shame and trouble was great enough to pay for the sins of the whole world : And I shall choose to expresse this mystery in the words of Scripture ; he died not by a single, or a sudden death but

A but he was the *Lamb slain from the beginning of the World*: For he was massacred in *Abel*, (saith Saint *Paulinus*) he was tossed upon the waves of the Sea, in the person of *Noah*: It was hee that went out of his Countrey, when *Abraham* was called from *Charan*, and wandred from his native soil: Hee was offered up in *Isaac*, persecuted in *Jacob*, betrayed in *Joseph*, blinded in *Sampson*, affronted in *Moses*, sawed in *Ezra*, cast into the dungeon with *Jeremy*. For all these were types of Christ suffering; and then his passion continued even after his resurrection; for it is he that suffers in all his members; it is he that endures the contradiction of all sinners; it is he that is the Lord of life, and is crucified again, and put to open shame in all the sufferings of his servants, and sins of rebels, and defiance of Apostates, and renegado's, and violence of Tyrants, and injustice of Usurpers, and the persecutions of his Church. It is he that is stoned in Saint *Stephen*, flayed in the person of Saint *Bartholomew*, he was roasted upon Saint *Laurence* his Gridiron, exposed to lions in Saint *Ignatius*, burned in Saint *Polycarpe*, frozen in the lake where stood fourty Martyrs of Cappadocia; *Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis sue sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum* said Saint *Hilary*. The Sacrament of Christs death is not to be accomplished, but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity.

C All that Christ came for, was, or was mingled with sufferings: For all those little joyes which God sent, either to recreate his person, or to illustrate his office, were abated, or attended with afflictions; God being more carefull to establish in him the Covenant of sufferings, then to refresh his sorrows: Presently after the Angels had finished their Halleluiahs, he was forced to fly to save his life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying Babes. God had no sooner made him Illustrious with a voyce from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of Baptisme; But he was delivered over to bee tempted and assaulted by the Devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory, but then also he entred into a cloud, and was told a sad story what hee was to suffer at Jerusalem: And upon Palme-Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King, and a God, hee wet the Palmes with his tears, sweeter then the drops of Mannah, or the little pearls of heaven, that descended upon mount Hermon, weeping in the midst of this triumph over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the Rainbowe, which God set in the clouds, as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace, he was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in his best dayes hee was but half triumph, and half sorrow; he was sent to tell of his Fathers mercies,

SER. IX, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company, or in the retinue of a shower, and of foul weather: But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person: that which concerns this question most, is that he made for us a Covenant of sufferings: His *Doctrines* were such as expressly and by consequent enioyne and suppose *sufferings*, and a state of affliction; His very *promises* were *sufferings*, his *beatitudes* were *sufferings*, his *rewards*, and his *arguments* to invite men to follow him, were onely taken from *sufferings* in this life, and the reward of *sufferings* hereafter.

For if we summon up the *Commandements* of Christ, we shall finde *humility*, *mortification*, *self-deniall*, *repentance*, *renouncing the world*, *mourning*, *taking up the crosse*, *dying for him*, *patience* and *poverty*, to stand in the chiefeft rank of Christian Precepts, and in the direct order to heaven: *Hee that will bee my Disciple must deny himself, and take up his crosse and follow mee.* We must follow him that was crowned with thorns and sorrows, him that was drench'd in Cedron, nailed upon the Crosse, that deserved all good, and suffered all evil: That is the summe of Christian Religion, as it distinguishes from all the Religions of the World. To which we may adde the expresse Precept recorded by Saint James, [*Be afflicted and mourn, and weep, let your laughter bee turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping.*] You see the Commandements: Will you also see the Promises? These they are. *In the world yee shall have tribulation: in me yee shall have peace: and through many tribulations, yee shall enter into heaven: and hee that loseth father and mother, wives, and children, houses, and lands for my Names sake and the Gospel, shall receive a hundred fold in this life, with persecution: That's part of his reward. [And he chastiseth every sonne that he receiveth; and if ye be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards and not sonnes: These are some of Christs promises: will you see some of Christs blessings, that he gives his Church: Blessed are the poor. Blessed are the hungry and thirstie. Blessed are they that mourn. Blessed are the humble. Blessed are the persecuted: Of the eight Beatitudes, five of them have temporall misery and meanesse, or an afflicted condition for their subject. Will you, at last see some of the reward, which Christ hath propounded to his servants, to invite them to follow him. When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me: when Christ is lifted up, as Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness, that is lifted upon the Crosse, then hee will draw us after him. To you it is given for Christ (saith Saint Paul) when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Philippians. Well, what is given to them? Some great favours surely, true. It is not onely given that you beleieve in Christ, (though that bee a great matter) but also that you suffer for him, that's the highest of your honour. And therefore saith Saint James, My brethren, count it all*

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James 4.10

Matth. 5

Phil. 1.28

James 5.10

SER. IX.

1 Pet. 4. 13

2 Theff. 1

Heb. 2. 10

1 Pet. 4. 12

Tertul.
S. Hieron.

Acts 9. 15

A joy when yee enter into divers temptations And Saint Peter, Communicating with the sufferings of Christ rejoyce: And Saint James again, *We count them blessed that have suffered*: And Saint Paul when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians, he uses this form of prayer: *Our Lord direct our hearts in the charity of God, and in the patience and sufferings of Christ*. So that if we will serve the King of sufferings, whose crown was of thorns, whose scepter was a reed of scorne, whose imperiall robe was a scarlet of mockery, whose throne was the Crosse; We must serve him in sufferings, in poverty of spirit, in humility, and mortification, and for our reward we shall have perfection, and all its blessed consequents: *Atque hoc est esse Christianum*.

B Since this was done in the green-tree, what might we expect should be done in the dry: Let us in the next place consider how God hath treated his Saints and servants, and the descending ages of the Gospel; That if the best of Gods servants were followers of Jesus in this covenant of sufferings, *we may not think it strange concerning the fiery triall, as if some new thing had happened to us*. For as the Gospel was founded in sufferings, we shall also see it grow in persecutions: and as Christs blood did cement the corner stones, and the first foundations; So the blood and sweat, the groans and sighings, the afflictions and mortifications of Saints, and martyrs did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the building.

C If I begin with the Apostles, who were to perswade the world to become Christian, and to use proper Arguments of invitation, we shall finde that they never offered an Argument of temporall prosperity: they never promised Empires and thrones on earth, nor riches, nor temporall power, and it would have been soon confuted, if they who were whipt and imprisoned, banished and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised Sunshine-dayes to others, which they could not to themselves: Of all the Apostles there was not one that died a natural death but one-ly Saint John; and did he escape? Yes: But he was put into a Cauldron of scalding lead and oil, before the Port Latin in Rome, and scaped death by miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him scape the torture: And besides this, he lived long in banishment, and that was worse then Saint Peters chains: *Sanctus Petrus in vinculis, & Johannes ante portam latinam*: were both dayes of Martyrdom and Church Festivals: and after a long and laborious life, and the affliction of being detained from his crown, and his sorrowes for the death of his fellow-Disciples, he died full of dayes and sufferings. And when Saint Paul was taken into the Apostolate, his Commissions were signed in these words; *I will shew unto him how great things he must suffer for my Name*: and his whole life was a continuall suffering: *Quotidie morior* was

SER. IX.

his Motto, *I die daily*; and his lesson that he daily learned was to know Christ Jesus and him crucified; and all his joy was to rejoyce in the Crosse of Christ; and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his sufferings, and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished his own sufferings for expiation of the world, yet there are *iniquum saltem*, portions that are behinde of the sufferings of Christ which must be filled up by his body the Church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol: for in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the same shall yee be also of the consolation. And therefore concerning S. Paul, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing or but very little in Scripture, relating to his person and chances of his private life, but his labours and persecutions, as if the Holy Ghost did think nothing fit to stand upon Record for Christ, but sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the Divine Providence: here was the Case of Christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosperous, learned and full of wise men, the Gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit: God was on one side, and the Devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their City; Babylon upon earth, Jerusalem from above; the Devils City was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories and cruelty; good news and great wealth, conquest over Kings, and making Nations tributary; They bound Kings in chains, and the Nobles with links of iron; and the inheritance of the Earth was theirs: The Romans were Lords over the greatest parts of the world; and God permitted to the Devil the Firmament and increase, the Wars and the success of that people, giving to him an intire power of disposing the great changes of the world, so as might best increase their greatnesse and power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman greatnesse was a professed enemy to Christianity: and on the other side God was to build up Jerusalem, and the Kingdom of the Gospel: and he chose to build it of hewen stone: cut and broken: The Apostles he chose for Preachers, and they had no learning; women and mean people were the first Disciples, and they had no power: the Devil was to lose his kingdom, and he wanted no malice: and therefore he stirred up, and as well as he could, he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of Barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the obstinacy of the Jews, against this Doctrine and Institution; which preached and promised, and brought persecution along with it. On the one side there was *scandalum crucis*, on the other *patientia sanctorum*, and what was the event? They that had overcome the world, could not strangle Christianity. But so have I seen the Sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darknesse, and without violence and noise climbing up the hill, hath made

A made night so to retire, that its memory was lost in the joyes and sprightfulnesse of the morning; and Christianity without violence or armies, without resistance and self-preservation, without strength or humane eloquence, without challenging of priviledges, or fighting against Tyranny, without alteration of government, and scandall of Princes, with its humility and meeknesse, with tolerations and patience. with obedience and charity, with praying, and dying, did insensibly turn the world into *Christian*, and persecution into *victory*.

B For Christ who began, and lived and died in sorrows, perceived his own sufferings to succeed so well, and that *for suffering death, he was crowned with immortality*, resolved to take all his Disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of his glory; knowing, God had opened no gate of Heaven but the narrow gate, to which the Crosse was the key: and since Christ now being our High Priest in heaven, intercedes for us by representing his passion, and the do-lours of the Crosse, that even in glory he might still preserve the mercies of his past sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in him: he also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with the
C marks of the Lord Jesus: He hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son: And if under a head crowned with thorns, we bring to God members circled with roses, and softnesse, and delicacy, triumphant members in the militant Church, God will reject us; he will not know us who are so unlike our elder brother: For we are members of the Lamb, not of the Lion, and of Christs suffering part, not of the triumphant part: and for three hundred yeers together, the Church lived upon blood, and was nourished with blood; the blood of her own children: Thirty three
D Bishops of Rome in immediate succession, were put to violent and unnaturall deaths: and so were all the Churches of the East and West built; the cause of Christ and of Religion was advanced by the sword, but it was the sword of the persecutours, not of resisters, or warriours: They were all baptized into the death of
E Christ, their very profession and institution is to live like him; and when he requires it, to die for him; that is the very formality, the life and essence of Christianity. This I say lasted for three hundred yeers, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of Christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutours, and prevailed till the Countrey, and the Cities, and the Court it self was filled with Christians: And by this time, the army of Martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of sufferers blunted the hang-mans sword: For Christ first triumphed over the princes and powers of the world, before he would admit them to serve him; he first felt their malice before he would make use of their defence,

*In whose hands so ever I be Rachel Whattsons
more me & Ths*

SERM. IX. to shew that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted *Kings and Queens to be nurses of the Church*. A

And now the Church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the Martyrs so long, began now to suck the milk of Queens: Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the holy Ghost in pursuance of the designe of Christ, who meant by sufferings to perfect his Church, as himself was by the same instrument, was pleased now that persecution did cease, to inspire the Church with the spirit of mortification and austerity; and then they made Colleges of sufferers, persons who to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of the Crosse, *the burden of the Lord*, by self deniall, by fastings and sackcloth, and pernoctations in prayer, they chose then to exercised the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering. B

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the Prince of the Catholick church, who was so a man of sufferings, and to whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have put on the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left, that is, in the sufferings of persecution, or the labours of mortification, in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own; by toleration or self-denial, by actual martyrdom, or by aptnesse or disposition towards it, by dying for Christ, or suffering for him; by being willing to part with all when he calls for it, and by parting with what we can, for the relief of his poor members. For know this, there is no state in the Church, so serene, no dayes so prosperous, in which God does not give to his servants, the powers and opportunities of suffering for him, not onely they that die for Christ, but they that live according to his laws, shall finde some lives to part with, and many wayes to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucifie the old man, and all his lusts, to mortifie a beloved sin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastly, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in religion, and to choose our side for truths sake (not because it is prosperous, but because it pleases God) to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and opennesse, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world, that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the importunity and troublesome kindnesse of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame; to refuse worldly pleasure when they tempt your soul, beyond duty or safety; to take pains in the cause of religion, the

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A *the labour of love* and the crossing of your anger, peevishnesse and morosity; these are the daily sufferings of a Christian; and if we performe them well, will have the same reward, and an equal smart and greater labour then the plain suffering the hang-mans sword. This I have discoursed, to represent unto you, that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christs sufferings; that God will shut no age nor no man from his portion of the crosse; that we cannot fail of the result of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the covenant of sufferings: *judgement must begin at Gods house*, and enters first upon the sons and heirs of the kingdom; and if it be not by the direct persecution of Tyrants, it will be by the persecution of the devil, or infirmities of our own flesh: But because this was but the secondary meaning of the text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

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1. Let no Christian man make any judgement concerning his condition, or his cause by the external event of things: for although in the law of Moses, God made with his people a covenant of temporal prosperity, and *his Saints did binde the kings* of the Amorites, and the Philistines *in chains, and their nobles with links of iron*; and then, *that was the honour which all his Saints had*; yet in Christ Jesus he made a covenant of sufferings: most of the graces of Christianity are suffering graces, and God hath predestinated us to sufferings: and we are baptized into suffering, and our very communions are symbols of our duty, by being the sacrament of Christs death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promised onely that he would be with us in tribulation, that he would give us his spirit to assist us at tribunals, and his grace to despise the world, and to contemn riches, and boldnesse to confesse every article of the Christian faith, in the face of armies and armed tyrants; and he also promised that *all things should work together for the best to his servants*, that is, he would *out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong issue sweetnesse*, and crowns and scepters should spring from crosses, and that the crosse it self should stand upon the globes and scepters of Princes; but he never promised to his servants, that they should pursue Kings and destroy armies, that they should reign over the nations, and promote the cause of Jesus Christ by breaking his commandements: *The shield of faith and the sword of the spirit, the armour of righteousness, and the weapons of spiritual warfare*, these are they by which christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possesse the chaires of Doctors, and the thrones of Princes, and the hearts of all men. But men in all ages will be tampering with shadows and toys. The Apostles at no hand could endure to hear that *Christs kingdom was not of this world*; and that their Master should die a sad and shameful death; though that way he was to receive his crown, and *enter into glory*: and after Christs time, when his Disciples had taken

SERM. IX.

up the crosse and were marching the Kings high way of sorrows, there were a very great many, even the generality of Christians for two or three ages together, who fell on dreaming that Christ should come and reign upon earth again, for a thousand years, and then the Saints should reigne in all abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it, till after the resurrection: in the mean time took up their crosse and followed after their Lord, the *King of sufferings*: But now adayes we finde a generation of men, who have changed the covenant of sufferings into victories, and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their Christianity by their good fortunes, as if Christ had promised to his servants no heaven hereafter, no spirit in the mean time to refresh their sorrows: as if he had enjoyned them no passive graces: but as if to be a Christian and to be a Turk were the same thing. Mahomes entered and possessed by the sword: Christ came by the crosse, entered by humility, and his saints *possesse their souls by patience*.

God was faine to multiply miracles to make Christ capable of being a man of sorrows; and shall we think he will work miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together, they are *not worthy to be compared*; and shall we with Dives choose our portion of *good things in this life*? If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive his glory? It is in vain to think we shall obtain glories at an easier rate, then to *drink of the brook in the way* in which Christ was drenched. When the Devil appeared to Saint Martin in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ, he answered, *Christus non nisi in cruce apparet suis in hac vita*. And when Saint Ignatius was newly tied in a chain to be led to his martyrdom, he cryed out, *nunc incipio esse Christianus*: And it was observed by Minutius Felix, and was indeed a great and excellent truth, *omnes viri fortes quos Gentiles prædicabant, in exemplum, ærumnis suis incliti flourerunt*. The Gentiles in their whole religion never propounded any man imitable, unless the man were poor or persecuted: Brutus stood for his countries liberty, but lost his army and his life: Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth: Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall upon the oppressed and the injured; he died together with his party.

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catani; And if God thus dealt with the best of Heathens, to whom he had made no clear revelation of immortal recompences, how little is the faith, and how much lesse is the patience of Christians, if they shall think much to suffer sorrows, since they so clearly see with the eye of faith the great things which are laid up for them that are *faithfull unto the death*. Faith is uselesse, if now in the midst of so great pretended lights we shall

A shall not dare to trust God, unless we have all in hand that we desire; and suffer nothing, for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of faith, yet our Lord Jesus, concerning whose Passions, the Gospel speaks much, but little of his glorifications, whose shame was publike, whose pains were notorious, but his joyes and transfigurations were secret, and kept private, he who would not suffer his holy mother, whom in great degrees he exempted from sinne, to be exempted from many and great sorrows, certainly intends to admit none to his resurrection, but by the doors of his grave, none to glory but by the way of the crosse. *If we be planted into the likenesse of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection*, else on no termes; Christ took away sin from us, but he left us our share of sufferings; and the Crosse which was first printed upon us in the waters of Baptisme, must for ever bee born by us in penance, in mortification, in self-denial, and in Martyrdom, and toleration according as God shall require of us by the changes of the world, and the condition of the Church.

C For Christ considers nothing, but souls, he values not their estate or bodies, supplying our want by his providence, and being secured, that our bodies may be killed, but cannot perish so long as wee preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ our Captain hangs naked upon the Crosse, our fellow-souldiers are cast into prison; torne with Lions, rent in sunder with trees returning from their violent bendings, broken upon wheels, rosted upon gridirons, and have had the honour not onely to have a good cause, but also to suffer for it, and by faith not by Armies, by patience not by fighting, have overcome the world; *Et sit anima mea cum Christianis*, I pray God my soul may bee among the Christians; and yet the Turks have prevailed upon a great part of the Christian World, and have made them slaves, and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous; but when Christians are so, then they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their Interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds, or poverty, change or scorne, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great successe to support their persons and their pretences; for nothing but innocence and Christianity can flourish in a persecution. I summe up this first discourse in a word: In all the Scripture, and in all the Authentike stories of the Church, wee finde it often, that the Devil appeared in the shape of an Angel of light, but was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted sufferer; Say no more therefore as the murmuring Israelites said; *If the LORD bee with us, why have*

SER. IX. *have these evils apprehended us? for if to be afflicted be a signe* A
that God hath forsaken a man, and refuses to own his Religion,
or his Question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murders the
innocent, and puts the fatherlesse to death, and follows providence by
doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God suffers him, he
I say is the onely Saint and servant of God: and upon the same
ground the wolf and the fox may boast when they scatter and de-
vour a flock of lambs and harmlesse sheep.



Serm-

Sermon. X.

The Faith and Patience of the SAINTS:

OR

The righteous Cause oppressed.

Part II.

IT follows now that we enquire concerning the reasons of the Divine Providence, in this administration of affairs, so far as he hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of his counsels and predestination: and for such an enquiry wee have the precedent of the Prophet Jeremy: *Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee, yet let us talk to thee of thy judgements: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? Thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root: they grow, yea they bring forth fruit.* Concerning which, in generall the Prophet Malachy gives this account after the same complaint made. *And now we call the proud happy, and they that work wickednesse are set up; yea they that tempt God are even delivered. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a Book of remembrance was written before time for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name, and they shall be mine (saith the Lord of Hosts) in that day when I binde up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own sonne that serveth him: Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.* In this interval which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoyce, who shall weep for ever; and they that sow in tears shall have no cause to complain, when God gathers all the mourners into his kingdom, they shall reap with joy.

For innocence and joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And joy went not first, but when innocence went away, sorrow and sickness

Jerem. 12. 1, 2

Malac. 3. 14

SER. X.

sicknesse dispossessed joy of its habitation; and now this world must be alwayes a scene of sorrows, and no joy can grow here but that which is imaginary and phantastick: there is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world; but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves, in the hopes and designs of iniquity: He that covets his neighbours wife, or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and cursed, to be a beast and die, or to lie wallowing in his filthinesse: but those holy souls who are not in love with the leprosie and the Itch, for the pleasure of scratching, they know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of Paradise; and that sorrow which was brought in by sinne, must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of innocence: the same instant that quits us from sinne, and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world; In the mean time:

God afflicts the godly, that he might manifest many of his Attributes, and his servants exercise many of their vertues.

Nec fortuna probat causas sequiturq; merentes,

Sed vaga per cunctorum nullo discrimine fertur:

Scilicet est aliud quod nos cogatq; regatq;

Majus, & in proprias ducat mortalia legas.

For, without sufferings of Saints God should lose the glories of
 1. Bringing good out of evil: 2. Of being *with us in tribulation*:
 3. Of sustaining our infirmities: 4. Of triumphing over the malice of his enemies: 5. Without the suffering of Saints, where were the exaltation of the crosse, the conformity of the members to Christ their Head, the Coronets of Martyrs? 6. Where were the trial of our faith? 7. Or the exercise of long suffering? 8. Where were the opportunities, to give God the greatest love? which cannot be but by dying and suffering for him? 9. How should that which the World calls folly prove the greatest wisdom? 10. and God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? By the suffering of Saints, Christian Religion is proved to be most excellent, whilst the iniquity & cruelty of the adversaries proves the *illicebra sectæ*, as Tertullians phrase is, it invites men to consider the secret excellencies of that Religion, *for which*, and *in which* men are so willing to die: for that Religion must needs bee worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortunes; 12. That a mans nature is passible, is its best advantage: for by it we are all redeemed: by the passivenesse and sufferings of our Lord and brother, we were all rescued from the portion of Devils; and by our suffering we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of

A of Angels: who indeed can sing Gods praise with a sweeter note, and obey him with a more unabated will, and execute his commands with a swifter wing, and a greater power; but they cannot die for God; they can lose no lands for him; and he that did so for all us, and commanded us to do so for him, *is ascended farre above all Angels,* and is Heir of a greater glory. 13. *Do this, and live,* was the covenant of the Law; but in the Gospel it is, *suffer this, and live: He that forsaketh house and land, friends and life, for my sake, is my disciple.* 14. By the sufferings of Saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errors to climbe up into heresies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

— *πυλὸν τὸ νῆμα τῆς ψυχῆς.*

Affliction makes a fool leave his folly. If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly: But if Augustus Cæsar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, hic diadema.

C And in giving physick we alwayes call that just and fitting, that is usefull and profitable: no man complains of his Physicians Iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body, if the belly be punished to chastise the floods of humour, and the evils of a surfet: Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for medicine; and God is then very carefull of thy soul, when he will suppress every of its evils, when it first discomposes the order of things, and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee, if a persecution drawes thee from the vanities of a former prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? What losse is it, what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil then the greatest of sufferings? God smites some at the beginning of their sin: Others not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say, that God is slack in punishing; and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous; for they finde that God is apt enough to strike; and therefore that he strikes them, and strikes not the other, is not defect of justice, but because there is not mercy in store, for them that sin and suffer not. 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to his servants; but then we must not call that a misery, which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because he hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envie that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: But if God forbears the wicked, that by his long sufferance they may be invited to repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted Saints, thus; 1. For if God be so gracious

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SERM. X.

to the wicked, how much more is he to the godly? And if sparing the wicked be a mercy, then smiting the Godly being the expression of his greater kindnesse; affliction is of it self the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindenesse, for the persecutor, so much as to invite them by kindnesse, how much greater is his love to them that are persecuted? and therefore his encounter with them is also a greater favour: and indeed it is the surer way of securing the duty; fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it: fair means are more apt to be abused then harsh physick; that may be turned into wantonnesse, but none but the impudent and grown sinners, despise all Gods judgements; and therefore God chooseth this way to deal with his erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great salvation: and yet if God spares not his children, how much lesse the reprobates? and therefore as the sparing the latter, commonly is a sad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16 For by this Oeconomy God gives us a great argument to prove the resurrection, since to his saints and servants he assigns sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of vertue, it may be its instrument, and hand-maid, but not its reward; and therefore it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life: *For if in this life onely we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable.* It is Saint Pauls argument to prove a beatificall resurrection: And we therefore may learn to estimate, the state of the afflicted Godly to be a mercy great, in proportion to the greatnesse of that reward, which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

*Nunc & damna juvant, sunt ipsa pericula tanti,
Stantia non poterant tunc probare Deos.*

It is a great matter, an infinite blessing to escape the pains of hell; and therefore that condition is also very blessed which God sends us to create and to confirme our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The sufferings of the Saints are the sum of Christian Philosophy; they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of heaven, whiles God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our Countrey, where God shall be our portion, and Angels our companions, and Christ our perpetuall feast, and a never ceasing joy shall be our condition and entertainment. *O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions!* but he that is uneasie in his body, and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his person, discomposed in his designs, who findes no pleasure, no rest here, will be glad to fix his heart, where onely he shall have what he can desire, and what can make him happy. As long

Ecclus. 40. 1.

as

SER. X.

Mat. 5. 12, &c.

2. 2. 119

A as the waters of persecutions are upon the earth, so long we dwell in the Ark; but where the land is dry, the Dove it self will be tempted to a wandering course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18 Christ nourisheth his Church by sufferings. 19. He hath given a single blessing to all other graces, but to them that are persecuted, he hath promised a double one. It being a double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, and then to be afflicted like him. 20 Without this, the miracles of patience, which God hath given to fortifie the spirits of the saints would signifie nothing. *Nemo enim tolerare tanta velis sine causa; nec potuit sine Deo*, as no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God; and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not sorrow and persecution; and therefore without this condition of suffering, the Spirit of God should lose that glorious Attribute of *The Holy Ghost the Comforter*. 21 Is there any thing more yet? Yes, They that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ, *shall sit upon thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel*, so said Christ to his Disciples. Nay the saints shall judge Angels, (saith Saint Paul) well therefore might Saint Paul say, *I rejoyce exceedingly in tribulation*. It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoyce exceedingly; and so it was. For since *patience is necessary that we receive the promise*, and tribulation does work this: *For a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope, even an exceeding weight of glory*. We have no reason to think it strange concerning the fiery tryall, as if it were a strange thing. It can be no hurt; the Church is like Moses bush, when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed, but made full of miracle, full of splendour, full of God: and unlesse we can finde something that God cannot turne into joy, wee have reason not onely to be patient, but rejoyce, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause: For *love is the soul of Christianity, and suffering is the soul of love*. To be innocent, and to be persecuted, are the body and soul of Christianity. I John your brother, and partaker of tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, said Saint John: Those were the titles and ornaments of his profession; that is, *I John your fellow Christian*; that's the plain song of the former descant. He therefore that is troubled, when he is afflicted in his outward man, that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds upon the ruines of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a begger, and a sinner be rich with oppression, that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied, and unrelieved, may as well wonder, that carnion crows should feed themselves fat upon a fair horse, farre better then himselfe, or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms, and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted

SERM. X.

into glory; That man knows nothing of *nature*, or *providence*, or *Christianity*, or the rewards of *virtue*, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of his loving kindnesse, or the rewards of heaven, or the glorifications of Christs exalted humanity, or the precepts of the Gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of Gods dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings in the cause of righteousness; For the securing of a *virtue*, for the imitation of Christ, and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwise, the world may as well cease to be measured by time, as good men to suffer affliction. I end this point with the words of Saint Paul, *Let as many as are perfect, bee thus minded, and if any man bee otherwise minded, God also will reveal this unto you.* this, of the Covenant of sufferings, concerning which the old Prophets, and holy men of the Temple had many thoughts of heart; but in the full sufferings of the Gospel, there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the sufferings, I have now given you an account of some of those reasons, why God hath so disposed it, that at this time, that is, under the period of the Gospel, judgement must begin at the house of God, and they are either, *τιμωται, or δοκιμασαι, or μαρτυρειν*, or imitation of Christs *νοτες*, chastisements, or trials; martyrdom, or a conformity to the sufferings of the Holy Jesus.

Bur now besides all the premises, wee have another account to make concerning the prosperity of the wicked: For if judgement first begin at us? what shall the end bee of them that obey not the Gospel of God? that is the question of the Apostle, and is the great instrument of comfort to persons ill treated in the actions of the world. The first ages of the Church lived upon *promises*, and *prophecies*; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and the others are of a continuall and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day: Therefore we and all the following Ages live upon *promises* and *experience*: and although the servants of God have suffered many calamities, from the tyrannic and prevalency of evil men their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamentall truths of Christianity; That all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the persecutions of the godly, able to make a good man miserable; nor yet their sadnesse arguments of Gods displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his businesse; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them: For who are fit to be hangmen, and executioners of publike wrath, but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder that they whose cause wants reason, should betake themselves to the sword? that what he cannot perswade he may wrest?

Phil. 3. 15

A wrest? onely we must not judge of the things of God by the mea-
sures of men, *in diuina*, the things of men have this world for their
stage, and their reward, but *the things of God* relate to *the world to*
come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and
by *the end of all*, not by events intermediall, which are varied by a
thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were
unprosperous (as most certain they are) and if all good persons were
temporally blessed (as most certainly they are not) yet this would
not move us to become vertuous: *If an angel should come from heaven,*
or *one arise from the dead* and preach repentance, or justice, and
B temperance, all this would be ineffectuall to those to whom the
plain doctrines of God, delivered in the Law and the Prophets will
not suffice.

For why should God work a signe to make us to beleeeve that
we ought to do justice; if we already beleeeve, he hath comman-
ded it, no man can need a miracle for the confirmation of that which
he already beleeeves to be the command of God: And when God
hath expressely bidden us to *obey every ordinance of man for the Lords*
sake, the King as supreme, and his deputies as sent by him: It is a
strange infidelity to think, that a rebellion against the ordinance of
C God, can be sanctified by succeſſe and prevalency, of them that
destroy *the authority, and the person, and the law, and the religion*:
The sin cannot grow to its height if it be crushed at the beginning;
unlesse it prosper in its progresse, a man cannot easily fill up the
measure of his iniquity: but then that the sin swells to its fulnesse
by prosperity, and grows too big to be suppressed without a mi-
racle, it is so far from excusing, or lessening the sin, that nothing
doth so nurse the sin as it: It is not vertue, because it is prosper-
ous, but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be
so great.

D ——— *Facere omnia serè*
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis.

A little crime is sure to smart, but when the sinner is grown rich,
and prosperous, and powerfull, he gets impunity.

Jusque datum sceleri ———

E But thats not innocence, and if prosperity were the voice of
God to approve an action, then no man were vitious, but he that
is punished, and nothing were rebellion, but that which cannot be
easily suppressed, and no man were a Pirate, but he that robs with
a little vessell, and no man could be a Tyrant, but he that is no
Prince, and no man an unjust invader of his neighbours rights, but
he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and
loud, then it calls to Heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long
a growing, when it hath thrived under the Devils managing; when

SERM. X. God hath long suffered it, and with patience in vain expecting the repentance of a sinner: he that treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished and a thriving sinner: but then it is the *sin* that thrives, *not the man*: and that is the mistake upon this whole question: for the sin cannot thrive, unlesse the man goes on without apparent punishment, and restraint. And all that the man gets by it is, that by a continual course of sin, he is prepared for an intolerable ruine. The Spirit of God bids us look upon *the end of these men*; not the way they walk, or the instrument of that pompous death. When Epaminondas was asked, which of the three was happiest, himself, Chabrias, or Iphichrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had seen the Vandals besiege the city of Hippo, and have known the barbarousness of that unchristned people, and had observed that S. *Augustine* with all his prayers and vows could not obtain peace in his own dayes, not so much as a reprieve for the persecution, and then had observed S. *Augustine* die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible then the reward of his piety and holy religion. When Lewis surnamed *Pius* went his voyage to Palestina upon a holy end, and for the glory of God to fight against the Saracens and Turks, and Mamalukes, the world did promise to themselves that a good cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man: but the event was far otherwise; his borthor *Robert* was killed, and his army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the money which by his Mother was sent for his redemption was cast a way in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last town the Christians had in Egypt, and brought home the crosse of Christ upon his shoulder in a real pressure and participation of his Masters sufferings. When Charles the fifth went to Algier to suppress pirates and unchristned villians, the cause was more confident then the event was prosperous: and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storme, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when religious persons rose to Mattins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers: but the providence of God trod upon those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery: his navie was beat in pieces, and his designe ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever cause more baffled then the Christian cause by the Turks, in all Asia and Affrica, and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a calamity? What Prince was ever more unfortunate then Henry the sixth of England, and yet that age saw none more pious and devout, and the title of the house of Lancaster was advanced against the right of York, for three descents; but then what was the end of these things? the persecuted men were made Saints, and their memories are preserved in honour, and their souls shall reign for ever; and

A and some good men were engaged in a wrong cause, and the good cause was sometimes managed by evil men, till that the suppressed cause was lifted up by God in the hands of a young and prosperous prince, and at last, both interests were satisfied in the conjunction of two roses, which was brought to issue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the divine providence: and there is no age, no history, no state, no great change in the world, but hath ministred an example of an *afflicted truth*, and a *prevailing sin*: For I will never more call that sinner prosperous, who after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die, and perish miserably: for at the same rate, we may envie the happiness of a poor fisherman, who while his nets were drying, slept upon the rock and dreamt that he was made a King; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy, falls down from the rock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities, loses his little portion of pleasure, and innocent solaces, he had from the sound sleep and little cares of his humble cottage.

B And what is the prosperity of the wicked? to dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to dispatch, and great cares to master; these things are of themselves neither good nor bad; but consider: would any man amongst us, looking and considering before hand, kill his lawfull King to be heir of all that which I have named? would any of you choose, to have God angry with you upon these terms? would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good, would not choose it: would any of you die an Atheist that you might live in plenty and power? I beleieve you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive, upon the stock of a great sin: for if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his soul up at a certain day, it may be 20. years hence, upon the condition he might for 20. years have his vain desires, should we not think that person infinitely miserable; every prosperous thriving sinner is in the same condition: within these twenty years, he shall be thrown into the portion of Devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasie upon him, that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. And that God defers the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their sin, it may and does serve many ends of providence, and mercy, but serves no end that any evil men can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

E *Bias* said well to a vitious person, *Non metuo ne non sis daturus penas, sed metuo ne id non sim visurus*, He was sure the man should be punished, he was not sure he should live to see it: and though the

SERM. X.

the Messenians that were betrayed and slain by Aristocrates in the battle of Cyprus, were not made alive again, yet the justice of God was admired, and treason infinitely disgraced, when twenty yeers after, the treason was discovered, and the traitor punished with a horrid death. Lyciscus gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipt in water, might rot off, if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did; *slay them not O Lord, lest my people forget it* (saith David) if punishment were instantly and totally inflicted, it would be but a sudden and single document: but a slow and lingring judgement, and, a wrath breaking out in the next age, is like an universal proposition, teaching our posterity, that God was angry all the while, that he had a long indignation in his brest, that he would not forget to take vengeance: and it is a demonstration, that even the prosperous sins of the present age, will finde the same period in the Divine revenge when men see a judgement upon the Nephews for the sins of their Grand-fathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the dayes of their Ancestors.

We know that when in Henry the eight, or Edward the sixth dayes, some great men pulled down Churches and built palaces, and rob'd religion of its just encouragements, and advantages; the men that did it were sacrilegious; and we finde also that God hath been punishing that great sin, ever since; and hath displaid to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes, against whom God was so angry, that he would shew his displeasure for a hundred yeers together. When Herod had killed the babes of Bethlehem, it was seven yeers before God called him to an account. But he that looks upon the end of that man, would rather choose the fate of the oppressed babes, then of the prevailing and triumphing Tyrant: It was forty yeers before God punished the Jews, for the execrable murder committed upon the person of their King, *the holy Jesus*; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attributed it to their killing S. James their Bishop and seemed to forget the greater crime, but *non eventu rerum sed fide verborum stamus*: we are to stand to the truth of Gods word not to the event of things. Because God hath given us a rule, but hath left the judgement to himself; and we die so quickly, (and God measures all things by his standard of eternity, and 1000 yeers to God is as but one day) that we are not competent persons to measure the times of Gods account, and the returns of judgement. We are dead before the arrow comes, but the man escapes not, unlesse his soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. *Ducunt in bonis dies suos & in momento descendunt ad infernum*, thats their

Job 21.

A their fate, *they spend their dayes in plenty, and in a moment descend into hell*: in the mean time they drink and forget their sorrow; but they are condemned, they have drunk their hemlock, but the poison does not work yet: the bait is in their mouthes, and they are sportive; but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruine; And let no man call the man fortunate, because his execution is deferr'd for a few dayes, when the very deferring shall increase, and ascertain the condemnation.

B But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing Tyrant, we should finde even in the dayes of his joyes, such allayes and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him *presently miserable*, besides his finall infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthfull person warm and ruddy under a poor and a thin garment, when at the same time, an old rich person hath been cold, and paralytick, under a load of fables, and the skins of foxes: it is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body: and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapt about a sickly and an uneasie soul. *Apollodorus* was a Traitor, and a Tyrant, and the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune; But knew not that hee nourished Scorpions in his brest, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with Spectres and images of death; his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of allusions, his fancie was abused with real troubles, and phantastick images, imagining that he saw the Scythians slaying him alive, his daughters like pillars of fire dancing round about a Cauldron in which himself was boyling, and that his heart accused it self to be the cause of all these evils: And although all Tyrants have not imaginative & phantastick consciences, yet all Tyrants shall die and *come to judgement*; and such a man is not to be feared, nor at all to be envied: and in the mean time can he be said to escape, who hath an unquiet conscience, who is already designed for hell, hee whom God hates, and the people curse, and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many desire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it? Is this man a blessed man? Is that man prosperous who hath stolen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is faine to defend it with the greatest difficulty and the greatest danger? Does not he drink more sweetly, that takes his beaverage in an earthen vessel, then he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale, at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts no body, and does not trust God for his safety, but does greater wickednesse only to escape a while unpunished for his former crimes? *Auro bibitur venenum*, No man goes about to poison a poor mans pitcher. nor layes plots to forrage his little garden made for the hospital of two Bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythagorean herbe-eaters.

ἐκ τῶν ὁσων πλεονήμιον πάντες
 ἔδ' ὅσον ἐν μαλαχίῃ τεκαί ἀσφοδέλω μαγ' ὄνειδος

They that admire the happinelle of a prosperous, prevailing Tyrant, know not the felicities, that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottages, and small fortunes.

A Christian so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to Religion, is bold in all accidents, he dares die, and he dares be poor; but if the persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholding to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the riches, the lesse good they are, and by an overvaluing affection, they become our danger and our sinne: But on the other side, death and persecution lose all the ill, that they can have, if we do not set an edge upon them by our fears, and by our vices. From our selves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may set their prices as we please; and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; And therefore that the prevailing Oppressor, Tyrant, or persecutor is infinitely miserable, onely let God chuse by what Instruments he will governe the world, by what instances himself would be served, by what wayes he will chastise the failings and exercise the duties, and reward the vertues of his servants. God sometimes punishes one sinne with another; pride with adultery, drunkennesse with murder, carelesnesse with irreligion, idlenesse with vanity, penury with oppression, irreligion with blasphemy, and that with Atheisme, and therefore it is no wonder if he punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate persons to frame an Armie; and Timoleon destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of souldiers, who themselves were sacrilegious; and Physicians use the poison to expel poisons; and all Common-wealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of Justice and executions; we shall have no further cause to wonder, if God raises up the *Affrians* to punish the *Israelites*, and the *Egyptians* to destroy the *Affrians*, and the *Ethiopians* to scourge the *Egyptians*; and at last his own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of separation, in the day when he makes up his Jewels.

πῶ ποτε κεραινοὶ Δίδος, ὦ

πῶ παύσῃ αὐτὸ

εἰ ταὐτ' ἐπορεύεσθαι

κευμήσιν ἀλλοι. Soph. Elect.

God hath many ends of providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men, by them he not onely checks the beginning errors, and approaching sinnes of his predefinate, but by them he changes governments, and alters kingdoms, and is terrible among the

sons

A *sons of men*: for since it is one of his glories, to convert evil into good, and that good into his own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of providence; it becomes us onely to dwell in duty, and to be silent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God; and let him choose the time when he will prune his vine, and when he will burn his thorns: how long he will smite his servants, and when he will destroy his enemies. In the dayes of the primitive persecutions, what prayers, how many fightings, how deep groans, how many bottles of teares did God gather into his repository, all praying for ease and deliverances, for *Halcyon dayes* and fine sunshine, for *nursing fathers* and *nursing mothers*, for publick assemblies, and open and solemn sacraments: And it was 3 hundred years before God would hear their prayers: and all that while the persecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe and knew it not: and God kept for them the best wine untill the last; they ventured for a crown and fought valiantly, they were *faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life*, and they are honored by God, by Angels, and by men; whereas in all the prosperous ages of the Church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of Saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary: scarce any made illustrious with a miracle, which in the dayes of suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the persecution, and troubles under it, we may please to remember that twenty years hence (it may be sooner, it will not be much longer) all our cares and our troubles shall be dead, and then it shall be enquired how we did bear our sorrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause, and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the *persecuted*, and the *persecutors* shall be shut out amongst *dogs and unbelievers*.

D He that shrinks from *the yoke of Christ*, from *the burden of the Lord*, upon his death-bed will have cause to remember, that by that time all his persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him, but rest and crowns and scepters. When Lyfimachus, impatient and overcome with thirst gave up his kingdom to the Getae, and being a captive, and having drank a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst was now gone, he fetched a deep sigh and said, *Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, lost so great a Kingdom*; such will be their case, who being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth, and an easie fortune, they shall finde themselves miserable, in the separations of eternity, losing the glories of heaven for so little a pleasure, *illiberalis & ingrata voluptatis causa*, as Plutarch calls it, for illiberall and ungrateful pleasure, in which when a man hath entred, he loses the rights and priviledges and honours of a good man, and gets nothing

SERM. X.

thing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes, or necessary to any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he needs neither God nor man to be a revenger, having already under his splendid robe, miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisy of his condition: being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vitious in their lives, and full of pageantry and out-sides, but in their death miserable, with calamities real, eternal and insupportable; and if it could be otherwise, vertue it self would be reproached with the calamity.

εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θάνατον
 γὰρ τὸ καὶ ἐνθάδε ὄν
 κείσεται τὰ λεία
 οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν
 δώσουσι ἀνίστηντες θάλασσαν,
 ἐρρωτε ἀνὰ αἰδίδος αὐτῶν
 τὸ ἐνστάσειαν θνήσκων.

Phil. 1. 28.

I end with the advice of Saint Paul, *In nothing be terrified of your adversaries, which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.*

Serm.

Sermon. XI.

The Faith and Patience of the SAINTS:

OR

The righteous Cause oppressed,

Part III.

B Ut now that the persecuted may at least be pitied, and assisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some rules by which they may learn to gather *grapes from their thorns*, and *figs from their thistles*, crowns from the crosse, glory from dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer persecution, or sorrow, no rules can teach them to avoid that; but *the evil* of the suffering, and the *danger*, must be declined, and we must use some spirituall arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine: for it were a hard thing, first to be scourged, and then to be crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter; through the fiery triall, and purging fire of afflictions, to passe into hell: that, is intolerable; and to be prevented with the following cautions, lest a man suffers like a fool, and a malefactor, or inherits damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

1. They that suffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for him, let them do nothing against him. For certainly they think too highly of martyrdom, who beleeve it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may give his body to be burned, and yet have no charity; and he that dies without charity, dies without God, *for God is love*: And when those who fought in the dayes of the Maccabees, for the defence of true Religion, and were killed in *those holy warres*, yet being dead, were found having about their necks, *insignias* or pendants, consecrated to idols of the *Jannenses*, it much allayed the hope, which by their dying in so good a cause was entertained concerning their beati-

M

ficall

SERM. XI.

ficall resurrection. He that overcomes his fear of death does well; but if he hath not also overcome his lust, or his anger, his *baptisme of blood* will not wash him clean. Many things may make a man willing to die in a good cause: Publike reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a confident resolution, and a masculine courage; or a man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: But nothing can make a man live well, but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy, as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity, if every good cause could be managed by good men onely; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good cause, but never that a good cause made those evil men good and holy. If the governour of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving Christian Baptisme, he had no more died a martyr, then he lived a saint. For dying is not enough, and dying in a good cause is not enough, but then onely we receive the crown of martyrdom, when our death is the seal of our life, and our life is a continuall testimony of our duty, and both give testimony to the excellencies of the religion, and glorifie the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him, but it burns him if he be like stubble, cheap, light, and uselesse: For martyrdom is the consummation of love: But then it must be supposed, that this grace must have had its beginning, and its severall stages, and periods, and must have passed thorow *labour* to *zeal*, thorow all the regions of duty, to the perfections of sufferings; and therefore it is a sad thing to observe, how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a religion, or such a cause, and though they dishonour their religion, or weigh down the cause with the prejudice of sin, beleve all is swallowed up by one honourable name, or the appellative of one vertue: If God had forbid nothing but heresie and treason, then to have been a *loyall man*, or of a good beleef, had been enough; but he that forbade rebellion, forbids also swearing, and covetousnesse, rapine, and oppression, lying, and cruelty; And it is a sad thing to see a man not onely to spend his time, and his *wealth* and *his money*, and *his friends* upon his lust, but to spend *his sufferings* too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly sin, devour his Martyrdom: He therefore that suffers in a good cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour, to which God hath called him; Let him first deny his sins, and then deny himself, and then he may take up his crosse and follow Christ; ever remembering that no man pleases God in his death, who hath walked perversely in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God, must be indifferent what the instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the cause, so it be a cause of God, and indifferent in the suffering,

A suffering, so it be of Gods appointment. For some men have a naturall averſation to ſome vices, or vertues, and a naturall affection to others. One man will die for his friend, and another will die for his money: Some men hate to be a rebell and will die for their Prince; but tempt them to ſuffer for the cauſe of the Church, in which they were baptized, and in whoſe communion they look for heaven, and then they are tempted, and fall away. Or if God hath choſen the cauſe for them, and they have accepted it, yet themſelves will chooſe the ſuffering. Right or wrong, ſome men will not endure a priſon; and ſome that can, yet chooſe the heavi-
 B-
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 E-
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3. Whoever ſuffer in a cauſe of God, from the hands of cruell and unreaſonable men, let them not be too forward to prognosti- cate evil and death to their enemies; but let them ſolace them- ſelves in the aſſurance of the Divine juſtice, by generall considera- tion, and in particular, pray for them that are our perſecutors. Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of God againſt the Tyrians, and becauſe he deſtroyed that city, God rewarded him with the ſpoile of Egypt, and it is not alwayes certain, that God will be angry with every man, by whoſe hand affliction comes up- on us. And ſometimes two armies have met and fought, and the wiſeſt man amongſt them could not ſay; that either of the Prin- ces had prevaricated either the lawes of God, or of Nations, and yet it may be ſome ſuperſtitious, eaſie, and half-witted people of either ſide, wonder that their enemies live ſo long. And there are very many caſes of warre concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in ſuch caſes, he that yeelds and quits his title rather than his charity, and the care of ſo many lives, is the wiſeſt and the beſt man; yet if neither of them will do ſo, let us not decree judgements from heaven, in caſes where we have no word from heaven, and thunder from our Tribunals, where no voice of God hath declared the ſentence. But in ſuch caſes where there is an evident tyranny or injuſtice, let us do like the good Sa- maritan, who dreſſed the wounded man, but never purſued the thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the croſſe with no- bleneſſe, and look up to Jeſus, who endured the croſſe, and deſpiſed the ſhame; but let us not take upon us the office of God, who will judge the Nations righteouſly, and when he hath delivered up our bodies, will reſcue our ſoules from the hands of unrighteous Judges.

SER. XL.

2 Tim. 3. 1.

2 Tim. 3. 9.

I remember in the story that Plutarch tells concerning the soul of Thespisus, that it met with a Prophetick Genius, who told him many things that should happen afterwards in the world, and the strangest of all was this. That there should be a King, *Qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet*: An excellent Prince, and a good man should be put to death by a rebel and usurping power; and yet that Prophetick soul could not tell that those rebels should within three years die miserable and accursed deaths; and in that great prophecy recorded by Saint Paul, *That in the last dayes perillous times should come, and men should be traitors and selvissh, having forms of godlinesse, and creeping into houses,*] yet could not tell us when these men should come to finall shame and ruine; onely by a generall signification he gave this signe of comfort to Gods persecuted servants, *But they shall proceed no further for their folly shall be manifest to all men: that is, at long running they shall shame themselves, and for the elects sake those dayes of evil shall be shortned.* But you and I may be dead first: And therefore onely remember, that they that with a credulous heart, and a loose tongue are too decretory, and enunciative of speedy judgements to their enemies, turn their religion into revenge, and therefore do beleeve it will be so, because they vehemently desire it should be so, which all wise and good men ought to suspect, as lesse agreeing with that charity which overcomes all the sins, and all the evils of the world, and sits down and rests in glory.

4. Do not trouble your self by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it: For reflexacts upon the suffering it self, can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience, to temptation, or apostacy. He that measures the grains and scruples of his persecution, will soon sit down and call for ease, or for a reward; will think the time long, or his burden great; will be apt to complain of his condition, or set a greater value upon his person. Look not back upon him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the crown that is set before thee; and then consider, if the losse of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world? whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit? and if thy uneasie prison sets thy soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of suffering turns into crowns and scepters, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual, and habituall; permanent, and preserving. For as the silk-worm eateth it self out of a seed to become a little worm, and there feeding on the leaves of mulberies, it grows till its coat be off, and then works it self into a house of silk, then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its silk for man, and dieth all white and winged in the shape of a flying creature. So is the

A the progresse of souls: when they are regenerate by Baptisme, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of Scriptures, and the fruits of the vine, and the joyes of the Sacrament, they incircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and vertuous habits; then by leaving their blood, which is the Churches seed, to raise up a new generation to God, they leave a blessed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into Angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their employments was in this world to suffer it; *fiat voluntas tua* is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification; *thy will be done* upon us: and if from thence also we translate it into an active sence; and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of Christians, and shall receive the reward of Martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral ayds and phantastick assistances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company: and so Phocion encouraged a timorous Greek condemned to die; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion; and when 40. Martyrs in Cappadocia suffered, and that a souldier standing by came and supplied the place of the one Apostate, who fell from his crown, being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen Confessors, and turn'd them into consummate Martyrs. But if martyrdom were but a phantastick thing, or relyed upon vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then very necessary to be assisted by images of things, and any thing, lesse then the proper instruments of religion: But since it is the greatest action of the religion, and relies upon the most excellent promises, and its formality is to be an action of love, and nothing is more firmly chosen, (by an after election (at least) then) an act of love; to support Martyrdom, or the duty of sufferings, by false arches and exteriour circumstances, is to build a tower upon the beams of the Sun, or to set up a wooden ladder to climbe up to Heaven; the soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy: and let no man hope to glorifie God and go to Heaven by a life of sufferings, unlesse he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his *choice*, his *patience*, and *confidence* in the causes of vertue and religion, like *beams*, and *warmth*, and *influence*, from the body of the Sun. Some there are that fall under the burden, when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the will in *patience* and *resignation*, but endeavour to lighten the burden in imagination; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that relies upon them, rushes into coldnesse, recidivation, and lukewarmnesse: and among all instances, that of the main question of the Text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and lesse severe persons.

*Nullus esse Deos, inane celum
Affirmat Selius, probatque quod se
Quid se Videt, dum negat hoc beatum.*

When men choose a good cause, upon confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of vertue, or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and successe to a greater evil : for they have not learned to distinguish a *great growing sin*, from a *thriving and prosperous fortune*.

*Vlla si juris tibi pejerati
Pœna Barine nocuisset unquam :
Dente sinigro fieret vel uno turpior ungui
Cyderem.*

They that beleieve and choose because of idle fears, and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit treason, for fear of being blasted, may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way, if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidentall hardnesse, and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and if the fancy of the standers by, or the hearing a cock crow, can adde any collaterall aids to thy weaknesse, refuse it not; But let thy state of sufferings *begin with choice*, and be confirmed with *knowledge*, and rely upon *love*, and the aids of *God*, and the expectations of *heaven*, and the present sense of *duty*, and then the action will be as glorious in the event, as it is prudent in the enterprife, and religious in the prosecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christs school, and entered thee into a state of sufferings, remember the advantages of that state : consider how unsavory the things of the world appear to thee, when thou art under the arrest of death; remember with what comforts the Spirit of God assists thy spirit; set down in thy heart all those entercourses, which happen between God and thy own soul; the sweetnesse of religion, the vanity of sins appearances, thy newly entertained resolutions, thy longings after heaven, and all the things of God, and if God finishes thy persecution with death, proceed in them : if he restores thee to the light of the world, and a temporall refreshment, change but the scene of sufferings in an active life, and converse with God upon the same principles on which in thy state of sufferings thou dost build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not lesse in love with heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy

A thy spirit be now as humble as before it was broken, and to what-
soever degree of sobriety or austerity, thy suffering condition did
enforce thee, if it may be turned into vertue, when God restores
thee (because then it was necessary thou shouldest entertain it by an
after choice) do now also by a prælection: that thou mayest say
with David, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I*
have learned thy commandements: and Paphnutius did not do his
foul more advantage, when he lost his right eye, and suffered his left
knee to be cut for Christianity, and the cause of God, then that in
the dayes of Constantine and the Churches peace, he lived, (not in
the toleration, but) in the active piety of a Martyrs condition;
B not now a confessor of the faith onely, but of the charity of a Christi-
an: we may ever onely live to have need of these rules; and I do
not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it:
and to whatsoever degree of sufferings God shall call us, we see what
advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we our selves
may make of it. I now proceed to make use of all the former dis-
course, by removing it a little further even into its utmost spiritual
sense; which the Apostle does in the last words of the text [*If*
the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner
C *appear.*]

These words are taken out of the Proverbs * according to the
translation of the 70. *If the righteous scarcely be safe;* where the word
κατασχευη implies that he is safe; but by intermedial difficulties: and
αυτοσχευη he is safe in the midst of his persecutions, they may disturb
his rest, and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery char-
riot to Elias; he is incircled with fire and rare circumstances, and
strange usages, but is carried up to Heaven in a robe of flames: and
so was Noah safe when the flood came: and was the great type
and instance too of the verification of this proposition, he was
D ο Νουα & ανασωων ηηουε. he was put into a strange condition, per-
petually wandering, shut up in a prison of wood, living upon faith,
having never had the experience of being safe in floods, And so have
I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when
every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every
motion and dancing of the barge seemed a danger, and made them
cling fast upon their fellows, and yet all the while they were as
safe as if they sat under a tree, while a gentle winde shook the
leaves into a refreshment, and a cooling shade: And the unskilful un-
experienced Christian strikes out when ever his vessel shakes, think-
ing it alwayes a danger, that the watry pavement is not stable and
E resident like a rock; and yet all his danger is in himself, none at all
from without: for he is indeed moving upon the waters, but fast-
ned to a rock; faith is his foundation, and hope is his anchor, and
death is his harbour, and Christ is his pilot, and heaven is his coun-
trei, and all the evils of poverty, or affronts of tribunals: and e-

* 11. cap. 31.

SER. XI.

vil judges, of fears and sadder apprehensions are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise and drive faster to the harbour: and if we do not leave the ship and leap into the sea, quit the interests of religion, and run to the securities of the world, cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes, grow impatient and hug a wave and die in its embraces, we are as safe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, then in a calm, when we are befriended with the world.

2. But *miris* may also signifie *rara*: If the righteous is seldom safe; which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense: God sometimes sends Halcyon dayes to his Church, and when he promised *Kings and Queens to be their nurses*, he intended it for a blessing; and yet this blessing does often times so ill succeed, that it is the greater blessing of the two, not to give us that blessing too freely: but *miris* this is *scarcely done*, and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing piety with such arguments, as comply with our infirmities, and though it be a shame to us to need such affectives and infant gauds, such which the heathen world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need, God who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as he corroborates our willing spirits, with proper entertainments, so also he supports our weak flesh, and not onely cheers an afflicted soul with beams of light, and antepasts and earnest of glory, but is kinde also to our man of flesh, and weaknesse; and to this purpose he sends thunder-bolts from heaven upon evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counsels, cursing their posterity, and ruining their families.

ἀλλοτρίαν δὲ αὐτῇ
 ἢ τῇ γὰρ ἐστὶν αὐτὴν ἀπώλεσεν, ἢ ἐχάτην
 ἢ νείας ἐν αὐτῇ κερκίδας ἀποστρέφει αὐτῶν.

Sometimes God destroyes their armies, or their strong holds, Sometimes breakes their ships, but this happens either for the weaknesse of some of his servants, and their too great aptnesse to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when he will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of his providence; and yet if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, onely Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous, and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger, but the other was as himself could wish it, rich and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong and amorous, and voluptuous, and so he fell, and though his fall was, yet his recovery was not upon record.

And yet the worst of evils that happen to the godly is better, tempo-

A temporally better, then the greatest external felicity of the wicked: that in all senses the question may be considerable and argumentative; *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?* if it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference. The godly man is timorous, and yet safe, tossed by the seas, and yet safe at anchor, impaired by evil accidents and righted by divine comforts, made sad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence, abused by the world, and yet an heir of heaven, hated by men, and beloved by God, loses one house and gets an hundred, he quits a convenient lodging room, and purchases a glorious country, is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience, he fares hardly and sleeps sweetly, he flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears, he is full of thought, but of no amazement; It is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted, he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good, and in the recompence of this, he hath God for his father, Christ for his Captain, the Holy Ghost for his supporter, so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage, for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But though Paul and Silas sing Psalms in prison and under the hang-mans whips and in an earth-quake, yet neither the Jaylor nor the persecuting Magistrates could do so: For the prosperity of the wicked is like a winters sun, or the joy of a condemned drunkard, it is a forgetfulness of his present danger, and his future sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency: he sits in the gates of the city, and judges others, and is condemned himself; he is honoured by the passers by, and is thought happy, but he sighs deeply; he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them; he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasy pillows which his thoughtfull head hath discomposed; when he is waking he dreams of greatness, when he sleeps he dreams of spectres and illusions; he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace, and in every unjust purchase himself is the greatest loser.

ὡς ἢ κἀν αὐτοῖς ἔλθῃαι ἀναδ' ὅπου πλῆθος
καὶ τὸ σμικρὸν ἔσται τοῖς ἐπὶ χυνοῖς φιλῶν ἑαυτοῦ.

Hesiod.

E For just upon his oppression or injustice, he is turned a Devil, and Gods enemy, a wolf to his brother, a greedy admirer of the baits of fishes, and the bread of dogs. he is unsafe by reason of his sin: for he hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the laws, the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person, and God and men, the laws of nations and private societies stand upon their

SER. XL.

their defence against this man; he is unsafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched, and suspected, and it may be, dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool and leaves a curse to his posterity.

Hesiod.

He leaves a generation of blacker children behind him; so the Poet describes the cursedness of their prosperity, and their memory sits down to eternal ages in dishonour, and by this time let them cast up their accounts, and see, if of all their violent purchases they carry any thing with them to the grave but sin, and a guilty conscience and a polluted soul, the anger of God and the shame of men; and what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate, for which thou diedst for ever.

Audire est opera pretium procedere recte

Qui machis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent:

utque illis multo corrupta dolore voluptas

Atque hac rara cadat dard inter saepe pericula.

And let but a sober answerer tell me, if any thing in the world be more distant either from goodnesse or happinesse, then to scatter the plague of an accursed soul, upon our dearest children; to make an universal curse; to be the fountain of a mischief, to be such a person, whom our children and nephews shall hate, and despise and curse, when they groan under the burden of that plague, which their fathers sins brought upon the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verifie the intent of my text; *If the righteous scarcely be saved*; or escape Gods angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable;

de Fayeo

οὐδὲν δ' ἔγωγε μὴ αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀνασθεῖν
οἷόν μιν τ' ἐμὸς ὢν ἐπὶ κακῶν ἀνδρῶν δίκαιον
ἐμμεναι

Neither I, nor my son (said the oldest of the Greek poets) would be vertuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable. No, not onely in the end of affaires, and at sun-set, but all the day long the Godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner is very miserable.

Pellitur

A Pellitur a populo victus Cato, tristior ille est,
 Qui vicit, fœcesque pudes rapuisse Catoni.
 Namque hoc dedecus est populi, morumque ruina.
 Non homo pulsus erat: sed in uno vicia positas
 Romanumque decus.

And there needs no other argument to be added, but this one great testimony; that though the Godly are afflicted, and persecuted, yet even they are blessed and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable.

B Quis curam neget esse te Deorum
 Propter quem fuit innocens ruina?

But turns into their advantages, and that the state of the Godly: and they are most intolerably accursed, who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin to whom even their sunshine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather; and that the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. *The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows: and the wicked are such whom prosperity it self cannot make fortunate.*

C 4. And yet after all this it is but *μὴ με οὐδὲν καὶ οὐδὲν καὶ οὐδὲν*, he escapes but hardly here: it will be well enough with him hereafter. Isaac digged three wells: the first was called *contention*; for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword: the second well was not altogether so hard a purchase, he got it with some trouble, but that being over, he had some room and his fortune swelled, and he called his well [enlargement] but his third he called [abundance] and then he dipt his foot in oyl, and drank freely as out of a river; every good man first *sowes in tears*, he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: But if they passe thorow a torrent, and that vertue becomes easie and habitual, they finde their hearts enlarged and made spritely by the visitations of God and refreshment of his spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

E Τὴν δ' ἀρετὴν ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν ἀποκρίσιν ἔδωκεν,
 —Μακροῦ δ' οὐδὲν οὐδὲν οὐδὲν αὐτὸν
 οὐδὲν οὐδὲν οὐδὲν.

At first we cannot serve God, but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons,

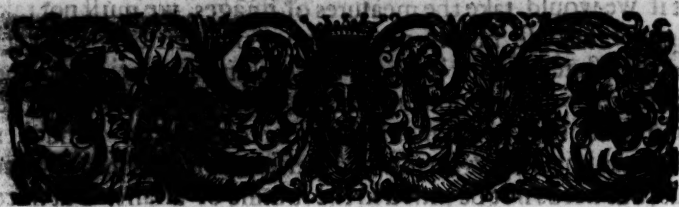
SER. XI.

ἡμῶν δ' οἱ ἀποστολῆς
 Πᾶσι δ' ἀποστολῆς χάρις καὶ εἰρήνη.

EPS. 54.8.

The second dayes of vertue are pleasant and easie in the midst of all the appendant labours; but when the Christians *last pit* is digged; when he is descended to his grave, and finished his state of sorrowes and suffering, then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people. *I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy on thee. Suth the Lord thy redeemer;* so much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joyes of an Angel, and a salutary frown by the light of Gods countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal Hallelujahs; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued, in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joyes: and if the blessed Martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings, and their present rest, and the joyes of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing, but in the mercies of God and in the *crasse of the Lord Jesus*. Every chain is a raie of light, and every prison is a palace, and every losse is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never ceasing numeration; dayes without night, joyes without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joyes without lessening, and they shall dwell in a blessed countrey, where an enemy never entred, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David say, *funes ceciderunt mihi in præclavis*, the cords of my tent, [my ropes and the sorrow of my pilgrimage] fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage; and when persecution hewes a man down from a high fortune, to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave, a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the Tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the souls prison, and let the soul forth to flie to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments; the executioner tore off their haire, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin, yet the offender cryed out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood: so does God to his servants; he rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and tyes them to Physick, and salutary discipline, and they cry out under usages which have nothing, but

A but the outward sence and opinion of evil, not the reall substance :
 But if we would take the measures of images, we must not take the
 height of the base, but the proportion of the members, nor yet mea-
 sure the estates of men by their big-looking supporter, or the cir-
 cumstance of an exterior advantage, but by its proper commensu-
 ration in its self, as it stands in its order to eternity : And then the
 godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution ought to be relieved
 by us, but needs not be pitied in the summe of affairs. But since the
 two estates of the world are measured by time, and by eternity, and
 divided by joy and sorrow, and no man shall have his portions of
 joyes in both durations ; the state of those men is insupportably mi-
 B serable, who are fatted for slaughter, and are crowned like beasts
 for sacrifice ; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their pur-
 chases, but by communications with others, and themselves have the
 least share, but themselves are alone in the misery, and the saddest
 dangers, and they possesse the whole portions of sorrows : to whom
 their prosperity gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to
 do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppresse a neighbour, or to
 nurse a lust, to increase folly, and treasure up calamity : And did
 C ever any man see or story tell, that any tyrant Prince kissed his rods,
 and axes, his sword of Justice, and his Imperiall ensignes of power ?
 They shine like a taper to all things but it self, but we read of many
 Martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and salu-
 ted their hangman with great endearments, and yet abating the in-
 cursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils ; and such
 they are, with which a wise and a good man may be in love : And
 till the sinners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans,
 and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God, and their portions of
 eternity ; till they can rejoyce in death, and long for a resurrection,
 and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of judge-
 D ment, we must conclude that their glasse gems, and finest pageantry,
 their splendid outsides, and great powers of evil, cannot make a-
 mends for that estate of misery which is their portion, with a cer-
 tainty as great as is the truth of God, and all the Articles of the
 Christian Creed. Miserable men are they who cannot be blessed,
 unlesse there be no day of judgement ; who must perish unlesse the
 word of God should fail ; If that be all their hopes, then we may
 with a sad spirit and a soul of pity inquire into the Question of the
 Text, *Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear ?* Even there where
 E Gods face shall never shine, where there shall be fire and no light,
 where there shall be no Angels, but what are many thousands yeers
 turned into Devils, where no good man shall ever dwell, and from
 whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. *O my God ;
 let my soul never come into their counsels, nor lie down in their sorrows.*



Sermon. XII.

THE MERCY OF THE DIVINE IVDGMENTS; OR

Gods Method in curing sinners.

Romans 2. 4.

Despiseſt thou the riches of his goodneſſe, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſſe of God leadeth thee to repentance.



From the beginning of Time till now, all effluxes which have come from God, have been nothing but emanations of his goodneſſe, clothed in variety of circumſtances. He made man with no other deſigne, then that man ſhould be happy; and by receiving derivations from his fountain of Mercy, might reflect glory to him: And therefore God making man for his own glory, made alſo a Paradife for mans uſe, and did him good to invite him to do himſelf a greater; for God gave forth demonſtrations

A situations of his power by instances of mercy: and he who might have made ten thousand worlds; of wonder and prodigy, and created man with faculties able onely to stare upon; and admire those miracles of mightinelle, did choose to instance his power in the effusions of mercy, that at the same instant he might represent himself desirable and adorable, in all the capacities of amability; that is, *us excellent in himself, and profitable to us.* For as the Sun sends forth a benigne and gentle influence on the seed of Plants; that it may invite forth the active and plastick power from its recesses and secrecie; that by rising into the tallnesse and dimensions of a tree, it may still receive a greater and more refreshing influence from its foster-father, the prince of all the bodies of light; and in all these emanations, the Sun it self receives no advantage, but the honour of doing benefits; so doth the almighty Father of all the creatures: He at first sends forth his blessings upon us, that we by using them aright, should make our selves capable of greater; while the giving glory to God, and doing homage to him are nothing for his advantage, but onely for ours: our duties towards him being like vapours ascending from the earth, not at all to refresh the region of the clouds, but to return back in a fruitfull and refreshing shower: And God created us, not that we can increase his felicity, but that he might have a subject receptive of felicity from him: thus he causes us to be born, that we may be capable of his blessings; he causes us to be baptized, that we may have a title to the glorious promises Evangelicall; he gives us his Son, that we may be rescued from hell: and when we constrain him to use harsh courses towards us, it is also in mercy: he smites us to cure a disease, he sends us sicknesse to procure our health; and as if God were all mercy, he is mercifull in his first designe, in all his instruments, in the way, and in the end of the journey, and does not onely shew the riches of his goodnesse to them *that do well*, but to all men that *they may do well*: he is good to make us good; he does us benefits to make us happy: and if we by *despising* such gracious raies of light and heat, stop their progresse and interrupt their designe, the losse is not Gods but ours; we shall be the miserable and accursed people: This is the sense and paraphrase of my text. *Despise thou the riches of his goodnesse, &c.* *Thou dost not know*, that is, thou considerest not that it is for further benefit that God does thee this; the goodnesse of God is not a designe to serve his own ends upon thee, but thine upon him: *The goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance.*

E Here then is Gods method of curing man-kinde, *χρησθης ενοχη. μαχεσθης.* First goodnesse, or inviting us to him by sugred words, by the placid arguments of temporall favour, and the propositions of excellent promises. Secondly *ενοχη* at the same time, although God is provoked every day, yet he does *επιχρη*, he tolerates

SER. XH.

our stubbornnesse, he forbears to punish, and when he does begin to strike, takes his hand off, and gives us truce and respite. For so *avoy* signifies *laxamentum*, and *indulgentia* too. Thirdly, *paragoge* is still, a long putting off, and deferring his *finall destroying anger*, by using all means to force us to repentance; and this especially by the way of judgements; these being the last reserves of the Divine mercy, and however we esteem it, is the greatest instance of the divine long suffering that is in the world. After these instruments, we may consider the end, the strand upon which these land us, the purpose of this variety; of these labours and admirable arts, with which God so studies and contrives the happiness and salvation of man; it is onely that man may be brought by these meanes unto repentance, and by repentance may be brought to eternall life: This is the treasure of the Divine goodnesse, the great and admirable efflux of the eternal beneficence; the *πλεονεξία*, the riches of his goodnesse, which whosoever despises, despises himself and the great interest of his own felicity; he shall die in his impenitence, and perish in his folly.

1. The first great instrument, that God choses to bring us to him is *χρησιμότης*, profit, or benefit; and this must needs be first, for those instruments whereby we have a being are so great mercies, that besides that they are such which give us the capacities of all other mercies, they are the advances of us in the greatest instances of promotion in the world: For from nothing to something is an infinite space, and a man must have a measure of infinite passed upon him, before he can perceive himself to be either happy or miserable: he is not able to give God thanks for one blessing, untill he hath received many. But then God intends we should enter upon his service at the beginning of our dayes, because even then he is before-hand with us, and hath already given us great instances of his goodnesse: What a prodigy of favour is it to us, that he hath passed by, so many formes of his creatures, and hath not set us down in the rank of any of them, till we came to be *paulo minores angelis*, a little lower then the Angels, and yet from the meanest of them God can perfect his own praise; The deeps and the snows, the hail and the rain, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, they can and do glorifie God, and give him praise in their capacity; and yet he gave them no speech, no reason, no immortal spirit, or capacity of eternall blessednesse; but he hath distinguished us from them by the absolute illues of his predestination, and hath given us a lasting and eternall spirit, excellent organs of perception, and wonderful instruments of expression, that we may joyn in consort with the morning star, and bear a part in the *Chorus* with the Angels of light, to sing *Allelujah* to the great Father of men and Angels.

But was it not a huge chain of mercies that we were not strangled

A gled in the regions of our own naturall impurities, but were sustained by the breath of God, from perishing in the womb, where God formed us *in secreta terra*, told our bones, and kept the order of nature, and the miracles of creation; and we lived upon that which in the next minute after we were born would strangle us if it were not removed: but then God took care of us, and his hands of providence clothed us and fed us. But why do I reckon the mercies of production which in every minute of our being are alike and continued, and are miracles in all senses, but that they are common and usuall? I onely desire you to remember, that God made all the works of his hands to serve him; and indeed this mercy of creating us such as we are, was not to lead us to repentance, but was a designe of innocence: he intended we should serve him as the Sun and the Moon do; as fire and water do: never to prevaricate the lawes he fixed to us, that we might have needed no repentance. But since we did degenerate, and being by God made better and more noble creatures then all the inhabitants of the air, the water and the earth besides, we made our selves baser and more ignoble then any: For no dog, crocodile, or swine was ever Gods enemy, as we made our selves: yet then from thence forward, God began his work of *leading us to repentance*, by the riches of his goodnessse. He causeth us to be born of Christian parents, under whom we were taught the mysteriousnesse of its goodnessse and designes, for the redemption of man: And by the designe of which religion repentance was taught to mankinde, and an excellent law given for distinction of good and evil; and this is a blessing, which though possible, we do not often put into our eucharisticall Letanies to give God thanks for, yet if we sadly consider, what had become of us, if we had been born under the dominion of a *Turkish* Lord, or in *America* where no Christians do in habite, where they worship the Devil, where witches are their priests, their prophets, their physicians, and their Oracles. can we chuse but apprehend a visible notorious necessity of perishing in those sins which we then should not have understood by the glasse of a divine law, to have declined, nor by a revelation have been taught to repent of? But since the best of men does in the midst of all the great advantages of lawes, and examples, and promises, and threatnings do many things he ought to be ashamed of, and needs to repent of, we can understand the riches of the Divine goodnessse best, by considering that the very designe of our birth and education in the Christian religion is, that we may recover of, and cure our follies by the antidote of repentance, which is preached to us as a doctrine, and propounded as a favour, which was put into a law, and purchased for us by a great expence, which God does not more command to us as a duty, then he gives us a blessing; For now that we shall not perish for our first follies, but be admitted to new conditions, to be re-

paired

SER. XII.

paired by second thoughts, to have our infirmities excused, and our sins forgiven, our habits lessened, and our malice cured after we were wounded, and sick, and dead, and buried, and in the possession of the Devil; this was such a blessing, so great riches of the Divine goodnesse, that as it was taught to no religion but the Christian, revealed by no law-giver but Christ, so it was a favour greater then ever God gave to the Angels and Devils: for although God was rich in the effusion of his goodnesse towards them, yet they were not admitted to the condition of second thoughts; Christ never shed one drop of blood for them, *his goodnesse did not lead them to repentance*: but to us it was that he made this largesse of his goodnesse; to us, to whom he made himself a brother, and sucked the paps of our mother; he paid the scores of our sin, and shame, and death, onely that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectually to the great purposes of felicity and salvation: And if we would consider this sadly, it might make us better to understand our madnesse and folly in refusing to repent; That is, *to be sorrowfull, and to leave all our sins, and to make amends by a holy life*. For that we might be admitted and suffered to do so, God was faine to pour forth all the riches of his goodnesse: It cost our dearest Lord the price of his dearest blood, many a thousand groans, millions of prayers and sighes, and at this instant, he is praying for our repentance: nay he hath prayed for our repentance these 1600. years incessantly, night and day, and shall do so till doomes-day, [*He sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us.*] And that we may know what he prays for, he hath sent us Embassadors to declare the purpose of all his designe, for Saint Paul saith, [*We are Embassadors for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead to be reconciled to God.*] The purpose of our Embassy and Ministry, is a prosecution of the mercies of God, and the work of Redemption, and the intercession and mediation of Christ: It is the work of atonement and reconciliation that God designed, and Christ died for, and still prays for, and we preach for, and you all must labour for.

And therefore here consider, if it be not infinite impiety to despise the riches of such a goodnesse which at so great a charge, with such infinite labour, and deep mysterious arts, invites us to repentance; that is, to such a thing that could not be granted to us unless Christ should die to purchase it; such a glorious favour, that is the issue of Christs prayers in heaven, and of all his labours, his sorrows, and his sufferings on earth: if we refuse to repent now, we do not so much refuse to do our own duty, as to accept of a reward; it is the greatest and the dearest blessing that ever God gave to Men, that they may repent, and therefore to deny it, or to delay it, is to refuse health, brought us by the skill and industry of the

A the Physitian; it is to refuse liberty indulged to us by our gracious Lord; and certainly we had reason to take it very ill, if at a great expence we should purchase a pardon for a servant and he out of a peevish pride or negligence shall refuse it; the scorne payes it self, the folly is its own scourge and sets down in an inglorious ruine.

B After the enumeration of these glories, these prodigies of mercies and loving kindneses, of Christs dying for us, and interceding for us, and merely that we may repent, and be saved; I shall lesse need to instance those other particularities whereby God continues, as by so many arguments of kindnesse to sweeten our natures and make them malleable to the precepts of *love* and *obedience*, the twinne daughters of holy *repentance*; but the poorest person amongst us, besides the blessing and graces already reckoned hath enough about him, and the accidents of every day to shame him into repentance. Does not God send his Angels to keep thee in all thy wayes? are not they ministring spirits sent forth to wait upon thee as thy guard? art not thou kept from drowning, from fracture of bones, from madnesse, from deformities, by the riches of the divine goodnesse? Tell the joynts of thy body, dost thou want a finger? and if thou C doest not understand how great a blessing that is, do but remember how ill thou canst spare the use of it when thou hast but a thorn in it? the very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, and integrity, which we all enjoy, deserve a thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face, or a wolf into thy brest, if he should spread a crust of leprosie upon thy skin, what wouldst thou give to be but as now thou art? wouldst thou not repent of thy sins upon that condition? which is the greater blessing to be kept from them, or to be cured of them? and why therefore shall not this greater blessing lead thee to repentance? why do D we not so aply promise repentance when we are sick upon the condition to be made well, and yet perpetually forget it when we are well? as if health never were a blessing, but when we have it not; rather I fear the reason is, when we are sick we promised to repent, because then we cannot sin the sins of our former life; but in health our appetites return to their capacity, and in all the way we despise the riches of the divine goodnesse which preserves us from such evils which would be full of horror and amazement if they should happen to us.

E Hath God made any of you all chapfallen? are you affrighted with spectars and illusions of the spirits of darknesse? how many earthquakes have you been in? how many dayes have any of you wanted bread? how many nights have you been without sleep? are any of you distracted of your senses? and if God gives you *meat* and *drink*, *health* and *sleep*, *proper seasons of the year*, *intire senses* and *an usefull understanding*, what a great unworthinesse it is to be un-

S
EK. XII.

unthankful to so good a God, so benigne a Father, so gracious a Lord? All the evils and baseness of the world can shew nothing baser and more unworthy their ingratitude: and therefore it was not unreasonably said of Aristotle, *ευχρηστος ο ευτυχης* prosperity makes a man love God, supposing men to have so much humanity left in them, as to love him from whom they have received so many favours. And Hippocrates said, that although poor men use to murmur against God, yet rich men will be offering sacrifice to their Deity whose beneficiaries they are. Now since the riches of the divine goodnesse are so powred out upon the meanest of us all, if we shall refuse to repent, which is a condition so reasonable, that God requires it onely for our sake, and that it may end in our felicity, we do our selves despite to be unthankfull to God; that is, we become miserable by making our selves basely criminal. And if any man with whom God hath used no other method but of his sweetnesse and the effusion of mercies, brings no other fruits but the apples of Sodom in return for all his culture and labours; God will cut off that unprofitable branch, that with Sodom it may suffer the flames of everlasting burning.

Οτι ου τοι δαδισας ο Ναθαν If here we have good things and a continual shower of blessings to soften our stony hearts, and we shall remain obdurate against those sermons of mercy which God makes us every day, there will come a time when this shall be upbraided to us that we had not *ουκ εβουληθη* a thankfull minde, but made God to sowe his seed upon the sand or upon the stones, without increase or restitution. It was a sad alarm which God sent to David by Nathan to upbraid his ingratitude. *I anointed thee king over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy masters house and wives into thy bosom, and the house of Israel and Judah, and if this had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things, wherefore hast thou despised the name of the Lord?* but how infinitely more can God say to all of us then all this came to? he hath anointed us kings and priests in the royall priesthood of Christianity; he hath given us his holy spirit to be our guide, his Angels to be our protectors, his creatures for our food and raiment; he hath delivered us from the hands of Satan, hath conquered death for us, hath taken the sting out and made it harmlesse and medicinal, and proclaimed us heirs of heaven, coheirs with the eternal Jesus, and if after all this, we despise the commandment of the Lord, and defer and neglect our repentance, what shame is great enough, what miseries are sharp enough, what hell painful enough for such horrid

A rid ingratitude? Saint Lewis the King having sent Ivo Bishop of Chartres on an embassy, the Bishop met a woman on the way, grave, sad, phantastick and melancholy, with fire in one hand and water in the other, he asked what those symbols ment, she answered, my purpose is with fire to burn Paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God. But this woman began at the wrong end: the love of God is not produced in us after we have contracted evil habits, till God with his fan in his hand hath thoroughly purged the floore, till he hath cast out all the devils, and swept the house with the instrument of hope and fear, and with the achievements and efficacy of mercies and judgements. But then since God may truly say to us, as of old to his rebellious people, *Am I a dry tree to the house of Israel?* that is, do I bring them no fruit, do they serve me for naught, and he expects not our duty till first we feel his goodnesse, we are now infinitely inexcusable to throw away so great riches, to despise such a goodnesse.

However that we may see the greatnesse of this treasure of goodnesse, God seldome leaves us thus: for he sees [be it spoken to the shame of our natures, and the dishonour of our manners] he sees that his mercies do not allure us, do not make us thankful; but (as the Roman said,) *felicitate corrumpimur*, we become worse for Gods mercy: and think it will be alwayes holiday; and are like the Christal of Arabia hardned not by cold, but made crusty and stubborn by the warmth of the divine fire, by its refreshments and mercies; therefore to demonstrate that God is good indeed, he continues his mercies still to us; but in another instance: he is merciful to us in punishing us, that by such instruments we may be led to repentance which will scare us from sin; he delivers us up to the pedagogy of the divine judgements, and there begins the second part of Gods method intimated in the word *ἀνοχή* or forbearance. God begins his cure by causticks, by incisions and instruments of vexation, to try if the disease that will not yield to the allecitives of cordials and perfumes, friction and baths, may be forced out by deleteries, scarifications, and more salutary but least pleasing Physicke.

2. *ἀνοχή* forbearance, it is called in the text, which signifies *laxamentum* or *inducias* that is, when the decrees of the divine judgements temporal are gone out, either wholly to suspend the execution of them, which is *inducia*, or a reprieve; or else when God hath struck once or twice, he takes off his hand, that is *laxamentum*, an ease or remission of his judgement, in both these, although in judgement God remembers mercy, yet we are under discipline, we are brought into the poenitential chamber; at least we are shewed the rod of God: and if like Moses rod it turnes us into serpents, and that we repent not but grow more Devils, yet, then it turnes into a rod again, and finishes

SER. XII. finishes up the smiting or the first designed affliction. A

But I consider it first in general; the riches of the divine goodness is manifest in beginning this new method of curing us, by severity and by a rod. And that you may not wonder that I expound this forbearance to be an act of *mercy punishing*, I observe that besides that the word supposes the method changed, and it is a mercy about judgements, and their manner of execution; it is also in the nature of the thing, in the conjunction of circumstances and the designs of God, a mercy when he threatens us or strikes us into repentance.

We think that the way of blessings and prosperous accidents is the finer way of securing our duty, and that when our heads are anointed, our cups crowned, and our tables full, the very careleses of our spirits will best of all dance before the Ark, and sing perpetual Anthems to the honour of our Benefactor and Patron God; and we are apt to dream that God will make his Saints raigne here as kings in a millenary kingdom, and give them the riches and fortunes of this world, that they may rule over men, and sing psalms to God for ever. But I remember what Xenophanes saies of God. B

ὅτι δὲ μὴ ἐν ἑνὶ ὁμοίῳ ὅτι νοῦμα.

God is like to men neither in shape nor in counsel, he knowes that his mercies confirme some, and encourage more, but they convert but few; alone they lead men to dissolution of manners and forgetfulness of God, rather then repentance: not but that mercies are competent and apt instruments of grace, if we would; but because we are more dispersed in our spirits, and by a prosperous accident are melted into joy and garrulitie, and drawn off from the sobriety of recollection. Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked. Many are not able to suffer and endure prosperity; it is like the light of the sun to a weak eye, glorious indeed in it self, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Adam himself (as the Rabbins say) did not dwell one night in Paradise, but was poisoned with prosperity, with the beauty of his fair wife, and a beauteous tree: and Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, the other to the old world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering: but as soon as the one of them had 'scaped from drowning, and the other from burning, and were put into security, they fell into crimes which have dishonoured their memories for above thirty generations together, the crimes of drunkenness and incest, wealth and a full fortune make men licentiously vicious, tempting a man with power to act all that he can desire or designe viciously. C

A *Inde ira facilis —*
Namq; ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto
Insulit, & rebus mores cessere secundis
— Cultus gestare decore
Vix viribus rapere mares: totoq; accersitur orbe
Quoq; quaq; perit.
 Lucan.

B And let me observe to you, that though there are in the New Testament many promises and provisions made for the poor in that very capacity, they having a title to some certain circumstances and additionals of grace and blessing, yet *to rich men* our blessed Saviour was pleased to make none at all, but to leave them involved in general comprehensions, and to have a title to the special promises, onely by becoming *poor in spirit*, and in preparation of minde, though not in fortune and possession. How ever, it is hard for God to perswade us to this, till we are taught it by a sad experience, that those prosperities which we think will make us serve God cheerfully, make us to serve the world and secular ends diligently, and God not at all.

C Repentance is a duty that best complies with affliction; it is a symbolical estate, of the same complexion and constitution; half the work of repentance is done by a sad accident, our spirits are made sad; our gayeties mortified, our wildness corrected, the water springs are ready to run over: but if God should grant our desires, and give to most men prosperity, with a designe to lead them to repentance, all his pompe and all his employment, and all his affections and passions, and all his circumstances are so many degrees of distance from the conditions and natures of repentance. It was reported by Dio concerning Nero's mother, that she often wished that her Son might be Emperour, and wished it with so great passion, that upon that condition she cared not though her Son might kill her; Her first wish and her second fear were both granted; but when she began to fear that her Son did really designe to murder her, she used all the art and instruments of diversion that a witty and a powerfull a timorous person, and a woman could invent or apply. Just so it is with us, so wee might have our wishes of prosperity, we promise to undergo all the severities of repentance; but when we are landed upon our desire, then every degree of satisfaction of those sensualities is a temptation against repentance: for a man must have his affections weaned from those possessions, before he can be reconciled to the possibilities of repentance.

E And because God knows this well, and loves us better then wee do our selves, therefore he sends upon us the x. scrolls of vengeance, *he had writing upon the wall*, to denounce judgement against us: for
 God

SER. XII.

God is so highly resolved to bring us to repentance some way or other, that if by his *goodnesse* he cannot *shame* us into it, he will try if by his *judgements* he can *fear* us into it; not that he strikes alwayes as soon as he hath sent his warrants out, *ὅτι τῆς ἀμαρτανίας ἐνδοῦς ἐπέβη εἰς αὐτούς; ἀλλὰ διδόναι χρόνον αὐτοῖς μετανοῆσαι, καὶ τὸ ἐκζητῆσαι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἰσχύαν*, said Philo. Thus God sent Jonas and denounced judgements against Nineveh; but with the *avoy*, with the forbearance of forty dayes for the time of their escape if they would repent. When Noah, the great preacher of righteousness, denounced the flood to all the World, it was with the *avoy*, with the forbearance of 120. years; and when the great extermination of the Jewish Nation, and their total deletion from being Gods people, was foretold by Christ, and decreed by God, yet they had the *avoy*, of forty years; in which they were perpetually called to repentance. These were reprieves and deferrings of the stroke. But sometimes God strikes once and then forbears, and such are all those sadnesses which are lesse then death; every sickness, every losse, every disgrace, the death of friends and neere relatives, sudden discontents; these are all of them the lowder calls of God to repentance; but still, instances of forbearance.

Indeed many times this forbearance makes men impudent; it was so in the case of Pharaoh, when God smote him, and then forbore; Pharaohs heart grew callous and insensible till God struck again; and this was the meaning of these words of God, *I will burden the heart of Pharaoh*, that is, I will forbear him, smite him, and then take the blow off, *Sic enim Deus induravit Pharaonis cor*, said Saint Basil. For as water taken off from fire will sooner congeal and become icy, then if it had not been attenuated by the heat; so is the heart of some men, when smitten by God, it seems soft and plyable, but taken off from the fire of affliction it presently becomes horrid, then stiff, and then hard as a rock of Adamant, or as the gates of death and hell. But this is besides the purpose and intention of the Divine mercy; this is an *avoy*, a plain contradiction to the riches of Gods goodnesse; this is to be *evil* because God is good; to burn with flames, because we are coold with water; this is to put out the lamps of heaven, or (if we cannot do it) to put out our own eyes, out, lest we should behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and be enamoured of his goodnesse, and repent and live. O take heed of despising this goodnesse; for this is one of Gods latest arts to save us; he hath no way left beyond this, but to punish us with a lasting judgement and a poinant affliction. In the Tomb of Terentia certain lamps burned under ground many ages together, but as soon as ever they were brought into the Air, and saw a bigger light, they went out, never to be rekindled: So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are *burning and shining lamps*, but when God comes

A comes with his ~~mercy~~ with his *forbearance*, and lifts us up from the gates of death and carries us abroad into the open Air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darknesse: and we cannot be preserved in heat and light but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow: And if such be our weaknesse, or our folly, it concerns us to pray against *such deliverances*, to be afraid of health, to beg of God to continue a persecution, and not to deny us the mercy of an affliction.

B And do not we finde all this to be a great truth in our selves? are we so great strangers to our own weaknesse and unworthinesse, as not to remember when GOD scared us with judgements in the neighbourhood, where we lived in a great plague, or if we were ever in a storm, or God had sent a sicknesse upon us; then we may please to remember, that repentance was our business, that wee designed mountains of piety, renewed our holy purposes, made vows and solemn sacraments to God to become penitent, and obedient persons; and wee may also remember without much considering, that as soon as God began to forbear us, we would no longer forbear to sinne, but adde flame to flame, a heap of sinnes to a treasure of wrath, already too big; being like Pharaoh, or Herod; or like the Oxe and Mule, more hardy and callous for our stripes; and melted in the fire, and frozen harder in the cold; worse for all our afflictions, and the worse for all Gods judgements; not bettered by his goodnesse, nor mollified by his threatnings: and what is there more left for God to do unto us? He that is not won by the sense of Gods mercy, can never finde any thing in God that shall convert him; and he whom fear and sense of pain cannot mend, can never finde any argument from himself that shall make him wise; This is sad, that nothing from without, and nothing from within shall move us; nothing in Heaven and nothing in Hell, neither love nor fear, gratitude to God, nor preservation of our selves shall make us to repent. *God's wrath will be his final sentence: He shall never escape that ruine from which the greatest art of God could not deliver, nor his terror scare him: he loved en-sing, therefore shall it happen to him, beloved not blessing, therefore shall it be farre from him.*

E Let therefore every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that GOD hath made us; besides that sweet language of his mercy, and his *still voice* from Heaven, consider what voices of thunder you have heard, and presently that noise ceased, and GOD was heard in the *still voice* again; What dangers have any of you escaped, were you ever assaulted by the rudenesse of an ill natured man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of you ever scape drowning,

SERMON.
XII.

drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? or suppose none of these things hath happened, hath not God threatned you all; and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you? that is evident. But if you had been a Privado, and of the Cabinet-councell with your Angel-Guardian, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been neer a ruine, so neer, that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; If he had but told you how often God had sent out his Warrants to the exterminating Angel, and our Blessed Saviour by his Intercession hath obtained a Reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoycing at thy conversion and repentance; If you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the Devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself as a ministring spirit of Gods goodnesse and forbearance, did interpose and abate, or divert a mischief, which was falling on thy head, it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude, and that folly, that neither will give God thanks, nor secure thy own well-being.

Hadst thou never any dangerous fall in thy intemperance? then God shewed thee thy danger, and that hee was angry at thy sinne, but yet did so pity thy person, that he would forbear thee a little longer, else that fall had been into thy grave.

When thy gluttony gave thee a surfet, and God gave thee a remedy, his meaning then was, that thy gluttony rather should be cured than thy surfet; that repentance should have been thy remedy, and abstinence and fasting should be thy cure: Did ever thy proud or revengefull spirit engage thee upon a Duell, or a vexatious Law-suit; and God brought thee off with life or peace? his purpose then was, that his mercy should reach thee charity: and he that cannot read the purposes of God written with the finger of judgement (for as yet his whole hand is not laid on) either is consigned to eternall ruine, because God will no more endeavour his cure, or if his mercy still continues and goes on in long-suffering, it shall be by such vexatious instruments, such causticks, and corrosives, such tormenting and desperate medicaments, such which in the very cure will soundly punish thy folly and ingratitude. For deceive not your selves, Gods mercy cannot be made a Patron for any mans impiety: the purpose of it is to bring us to repentance, and God will do it by the *mercies of his mercies*, or by the *mercies of his judgements*: he will either break our hearts into a thousand fragments of contrition, or break our bones in the ruines of the grave and hell: And since Gods joytes in his mercy

A above all his works, he will be most impatient that we shall despise that, in which he most delights, and in which we have the greatest reason to delight, *the riches of that goodnesse which is essentiall,* and part of his glory, and is communicated to us, to bring us to repentance, that we may partake of that *goodnesse*, and behold that *glory*.

B Sermon. XIII.

The Mercies of the Divine Judgements.

C Part II.

D **M**^{Arxodupla.} *long-suffering*; in this one word are contained all the treasures of the Divine goodnesse: here is the length and extension of his mercy, *pertrahit spiritum super nos Dominus*, so the Syrian Interpreter reads, *Luk. 18. 7. God holds his breath*: He retains his anger within him, lest it should come forth and blast us: And here is also much of the Divine justice: for although God suffers long, yet he does not let us alone: he forbears to destroy us, but not to punish us; and in both, he by many accidents gives probation of his power; according to the prayer of the Wise man, *Θεός ὁ ἐλεῖς ὅτι μὴ γὰρ δύνασαι ἡμετέρας ἀδικήματα ἀνέξαι*; *Thou art mercifull towards us all, because thou canst do all things, and thou passedst by the finnes of men that they may repent.* And that, God shall support our spirit, and preserve our patience, and nourish our hope, and correct our stubbornnesse, and mortifie our pride, and bring us to him whether we will or no, by such gracious violences, and mercifull judgements which he uses towards us as his last remedies, is not onely the demonstration of a mighty mercy, but of an Almighty power: So hard a thing it is to make us leave our follies and become wise, that were not the mercies of God an effective pity, and clothed in all the way of its progreffe with mightinesse and power, every sinner should perish irrevocably. But this is *the fiery triall*, the last *purgatory fire*, which God uses to burn the thistles, and purifie the drosse: When the

E

Wisd. ii. 24.

SERMON.

XXI.

gentle influence of a Sun-beam will not wither them, nor the weeding-hook of a short affliction cut them out; then God comes with fire to burn us; with the ax laid to the root of the tree: but then observe, that when we are under this state of cure, we are so near destruction, that the same instrument that God uses for remedy to us, is also prepared to destroy us; the fire is as apt to burn us to ashes, as to cleansing, when we are so overgrown; and the ax as instrumentall to cut us down for fewell, as to square us for building in Gods temple: and therefore when it comes thus far, it will be hard discerning what the purpose of the ax is; and whether the fire means to burn, we shall know it by the change wrought upon our selves. For what Plato said concerning his dream of Purgatory is true here: *Quicumque non purgatus migrat ad inferos, jacebit in luto: quicumque vero mitratus illuc accesserit, habitabit cum Deis*: He that dies in his impurities shall lie in it for ever, but he that descends to his grave purged and mitred, that is, having quitted his vices, & superinduens justitiam, being clothed with righteousness, shall dwell in light and immortality. It is sad that we put God to such extremities, and as it happens in long diseases, those which Physicians use for the last remedies seldom prevail; and when consumptive persons come to have their heads shaven, they do not often escape: So it is when we put God to his last remedies; God indeed hath the glory of his patience, and his long-suffering, but we seldom have the benefit and the use of it. For if when our sin was young, and our strength more active, and our habits lesse, and vertue not so much a stranger to us, we suffered sin to prevail upon us, to grow stronger then the ruines of our spirit, and to lesson us into the state of sicknesse and disability, in the midst of all those remedies which God used to our beginning diseases: much more desperate is our recovery, when our disease is stronger and our faculties weaker, when our sins reigne in us, and our thoughts of vertue are not alive.

However, although I say this, and it is highly considerable, to the purpose that we never suffer things to come to this extremity, yet if it be upon us, we must do as well as we can: But then we are to look upon it as a designe of Gods last mercy, beyond which, if we protract our repentance, our condition is desperately miserable. The whole state of which mercy we understand by the parable of the King reckoning with his servants that were in arrears to him: One was brought to him, which owed him ten thousand talents; but forasmuch as hee had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made: The man you see was under the arrest; the sentence was passed upon him, he was a condemned man; but before the execution of it, he fell down and worshipped and said, *domine, non habeo. Domine, Lord suffer me longer a while; have patience with me, and I will pay*

A *parthes* all. This tells its meaning: this is a long-sufferance, by being a forbearance onely of execution of the last sentence; a putting off damnation upon a longer tryall of our emendation; but in the mean time it implies no other ease, but that together with his long sufferance God may use all other severities and scourges to break our untamed spirits, and to soften them with hammers; so death be put off; no matter else what hardship and loads of sufferance we have. *Hic ure, hic seca, ut in aeternum parcas*, so Saint Austin prayed, *Here O Lord cut me, here burn me. spare me not now, that thou mayest spare me for ever*. And it is just like the mercy used to a mad man, when he is kept in a dark room and tamed with whips, it is a cruel mercy, but such as his condition requires, he can receive no other mercy; all things else were cruelly unmercifull.

B I remember what Bion observed wittily of the punishment inflicted upon the daughters of Danaus; whom the old Poets foined to be condemned in hell to fill a bottomlesse tub with water, and to increase the pain (as they fancied) this water they were to carry in sieves, and never to leave work till the tub were full; It is well (sayes he) since their labour must be eternall, that it is so gentle; for it were more pains to carry their water in whole vessels, and a sad burden to go loaden to a leaking tub with unfruitfull labours:
C Just so is the condition of those persons upon whom a wrath is gone out; it is a sad sentence, but acted with a gentle instrument; and since they are condemned to pay the scores of their sins with the sufferance of a load of judgements, it is well they are such as will run quite thorough them, and not stick upon them to eternity. *Omnem enim paena non exterminantes sunt medicinales*: All punishments whatsoever which do not destroy us, are intended to save us; they are lancets which make a wound but to let forth the venome of our ulcers; when God slew twenty three thousand of the Assyrians for their fornication, that was a finall justice upon their persons, and consigned them to a sad eternity: for beyond such an infliction there was no remedy. But when God sent lions to the Assyrian inhabitants of Samaria, and the judgements drave them to inquire after the manner of the God of the land, and they sent for Priests from Jerusalem to teach them how to worship the God of Israel, that was a mercy and a judgement too: the long forbearance of God who destroyed not at all the inhabitants, lead the rest into repentance.

D
E 1. And I must make this observation to you; That when things come to this passe, that God is forced to the last remedies of judgements, this long-sufferance will little or nothing concern particular persons, but nations and communities of men: for those who are smitten with judgement, if God takes his hands off again and so opens a way for their repentance by prolonging their times; that comes under the second part of Gods method, *the avoyd, or*

SER. XIII *forbearance*; but if he smites single persons with a small judgement, that is, *a long-suffering* not of him, but towards others: and God hath destroyed my neighbour to make me repent, my neighbours time being expired, and the date of his possibility determined. For a mans death-bed is but an ill station for a penitent, and a small judgement is no good monitor to him, to whom it is a severe executioner. They that perished in the gainsaying of Corah were out of the conditions of repentance; but the people that were affrighted with the neighbourhood of the judgement and the expresse of Gods anger manifested in such visible remonstrances, they were the men called unto repentance. But concerning whole nations, or communities of men this long-sufferance is a Sermon of repentance; loud, clamorous, and highly argumentative. When God suffered the murmuries, the affronts, the baseness, and ingratitude, the follies, and relapses of the children of Israel, who murmured against God ten times in the wilderness, God sent evil angels among them, and fiery serpents, and pestilence, and fire from heaven, and prodigies from the earth, and a prevailing sword of the enemies, and in all these accidents, although some innocent persons felt the contingencies and variety of mortality, yet those wicked persons who fell by the designe of Gods anger, were made examples unto others and instances of Gods forbearance to the Nation: and yet this forbearance was such, that although God preserved the Nation in being and in title to the first promises, yet all the particular persons that came from Egypt died in the wilderness, two only excepted.

2. And I desire you to observe this, that you may truly estimate the arts of the Divine justice and mercy: For all the world being one continuall and intire argument of the Divine mercy, we are apt to abuse that mercy to vain confidences and presumption; First, mistaking the end, as if Gods mercy would be indulgent to our sin, to which it is the greatest enemy in the world, for it is a certain truth, that the mercy of God is as great an enemy to sin as his justice is, and as Gods justice is made the hand-maid of his mercy to cure sin, so it is the servant also and the instrument to avenge our despight and contempt of mercy; and in all the way where a difference can be, there justice is the lesse principall. And it were a great signe of folly and a huge mistake to think our Lord and friends do us offices of kindnesse, to make themselves more capable of affronts; and that our fathers care over us, and provisions for us can tempt us to disobey them: The very purpose of all those emanations is, that their love may return in duty, and their providence be the parent of our prudence, and their care be crowned with our piety, and then we shall all be crowned, and shall return like the year, the ends into its own circle; and the fathers and the children, the benefactors and the beneficiary shall knit the

A the wreath and binde each other in the eternall inclosures and cir-
clings of immortality, * but besides the men who presume to sin
because of Gods mercy, do mistake the very end and designe of Gods
mercy, they also mistake the Oeconomy of it, and the manner of its
ministration.

3. For if God suffers men to go on in sins and punishes them not,
it is not a mercy, it is not a forbearance; it is a hardening them, a
consigning them to ruine, and reprobation, and themselves give
the best argument to prove it; for they continue in their sin, they
multiply their iniquity, and every day grow more enemy to
B God, and that is no mercy that increases their hostility and en-
mity with God. A prosperous iniquity, is the most unprosperous
condition in the whole world; *when he slew them they sought him,*
and turned them early and enquired after God: but as long as they pre-
vailed upon their enemies then *they forgot that God was their strength*
and the high God was their redeemer. It was well observed by the
Persian Embassadour of old, when he was telling the King a sad sto-
ry of the overthrow of all his army by the Athenians; he addes
this of his own; that the day before the fight, the young Persian
gallants being confident they should destroy their enemies, were
C drinking drunk, and railing at the timorounesse and fears of reli-
gion, and against all their Gods, saying, there were no such things,
and that all things came by chance, and industry, nothing by the pro-
vidence of the supreme power. But the next day when they had
fought unprosperously and flying from their enemies, who were
eager in their pursuit, they came to the river *Strymon*, which was
so frozen, that their boats could not lanch, and yet it began to
thaw, so that they feared the ice would not bear them. Then you
should see the bold gallants that the day before said there was no
God, most timorously and superstitiously fall upon their faces and
D begged of God, that the river *Strymon* might bear them over from
their enemies. What wisdom and Philosophy and perpetual ex-
perience, and revelation and promises and blessings cannot do, a
mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of a bold lust, and an
imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lownesse of a Childe,
our revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the
blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore God hath taken a course
proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give
milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egge to the bignesse of a co-
catrice: and therefore observe how it is, that Gods mercy pre-
vayles over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be dis-
E cerned, but his judgements. For as when a famine had been in Is-
rael in the dayes of Ahab for three years and a half, when the an-
gry prophet Elijah met the King, and presently a great winde a-
rose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad,
and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the
prophet

SER. XIII. prophet was the most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautifull, then when the Sunne puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegrome going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the Oeconomy of the divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the windes blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with Cypresse and yew, *and the mourners go about the streets*, this is nothing but the *pompa misericordie*, this is the funerall of our sins; dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death, but the light is refreshing, as the beauties of the field which God hath blessed, and the sounds are healthfull as the noise of a physician.

Psal. 74. 9.

This is that riddle spoken of in the Psalme, *Calix in manu Dom. vini meri plenus misco*; the pure impure, the mingled unmingled cup; for it is a cup in which God hath powred much of his severity and anger, and yet it is pure and unmingled; for it is all mercy: and so the riddle is resolved, and our cup is full and made more wholsome, *lymphatum crescit, dulcescit kadere nescit*, it is some justice, and yet it is all mercy; *the very justice of God being an act of mercy*, a forbearance of the man, or the nation, and the punishing the sin. Thus it was in the case of the children of Israel, when they ran after the bleating of the idolatrous calves, Moses prayed passionately, and God heard his prayer, and forgave their sin upon them. And this was Davids observation of the manner of Gods mercy to them; *Thou wast a God and forgavest them, though thou takest vengeance of their inventions*: for Gods mercy is given to us by parts; and to certain purposes; sometimes God onely so forgives us, that he does not cut us off in the sin, but yet layes on a heavy load of judgements: so he did to his people, when he sent them to schoole under the discipline of 70 years captivity; sometimes he makes a judgement lesse, and forgives in respect of the degree of the infliction: he strikes more gently; and whereas God had designed it may be the death of thy self or thy neere relative, he is content to take the life of a childe, and so he did to David when he forbore him, *the Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die, nevertheless the childe that is born unto thee that shall die*: sometimes he puts the evil off to a further day, as he did in the case of Ahab, and Hezekiah: to the first he brought the evil upon his house, and to the second he brought the evil upon his kingdom, in his sons dayes; God forgiving onely so as to respite the evil, that they should have peace in their own dayes. And thus when we have committed a sin against God, which hath highly provoked him to anger, even upon our repentance we are not sure to be forgiven, so as we understand forgivenesse; that is, to hear no more of it, never to be called to an account; but we are happy, if God so forgive us, as not to throw us into the insufferable flames of hell, though he smite us till

Psal. 98. 8.

A

B

C

D

E

A still wee groan for our misery till wee chatter like a Smallow (as Davids expression is) and though David was an excellent penitent, yet after he had lost the childe begotten of Bathsheba, and God had told him he had forgiven him, yet he raised up his darling Son against him, and forced him to an inglorious flight, and his Son lay with his Fathers concubines in the face of all Israel: so that when we are forgiven, yet it is ten to one, but God will make us to smart and roar for our sinnes, for the very disquietnesse of our souls.

B For if we sinne and ask God forgiveness, and then are quiet, we feel so little inconvenience in the trade, that we may more easily be tempted to make a trade of it indeed. I wish to God that for every sin we have committed, we should heartily cry God mercy and leave it, and judge our selves for it to prevent Gods anger, but when we have done all that we commonly call repentance, and when possibly God hath forgiven us to some purposes, yet it may be he punishes our sinne when we least think of it; that sinne which we have long since forgotten. It may be for the lust of thy youth thou hast a healthlesse old age; an old religious person long agoe complained, it was his case.

C *Quos nimis effrænes habui, nunc vapulo renes:*
Sic luitur juvenis culpa dolore senis.

D It may be thy fore eyes are the punishment of thy intemperance seven yeers ago, or God cuts thy dayes shorter, and thou shalt die in a florid age, or he raises up afflictions to thee in thine own house, in thine own bowels, or hath sent a gangren into thy estate, or with any arrow out of his quiver he can wound thee, and the arrow shall stick fast in thy flesh, although God hath forgiven thy sinne to many purposes. Our blessed Saviour was heard in all that he prayed for (said the Apostle) and he prayed for the Jews that crucified him: Father forgive them, for they know not what they do, and God did forgive that great sinne, but how far? Whereas it was just in God to deprive them of all possibility of receiving benefit from the death of Christ, yet God admitted them to it, he gave them time and possibilities, and helps, and great advantages to bring them to repentance; he did not presently shut them up, in his finall and eternall anger: and yet he had finally resolved to destroy their City and Nation, and did so, but forbore them fourty yeers, and gave them all the helps of Miracles and Sermons Apostolical to shame them, and force them into sorrow for their fault. And before any man can repent God hath forgiven the man in one degree of forgiveness; for he hath given him grace of repentance, and taken from him that finall anger of the spirit of reprobation: and when

SERMON.
XIII.

when a man hath repented, no man can say that God hath forgiven him to all purposes, but he hath reserves of anger to punish the sinner, to make the man afraid to sin any more, and to represent that when any man hath sinned what ever he does afterwards hee shall be miserable as long as he lives, vexed with its adherencies and its neighbour-hood, and evil consequence. For as no man that hath sinned, can during his life ever return to an integral and perfect innocence: so neither shall he be restored to a perfect peace, but must alwayes watch and strive against his sinne, and alwayes mourn and pray for its pardon, and alwayes finde cause to hate it, by knowing himself to bee for ever in danger of enduring some grievous calamity, even for those sinnes for which hee hath truly repented him, for which God hath in many gracious degrees passed his pardon; this is the manner of the dispensation of the Divine Mercy, in respect of particular persons, and Nations too.

But sometimes we finde a severer judgement happening upon a people, and yet in that sad story, Gods Mercy sings the triumph, which although it be much to Gods glory, yet it is a sad story to sinning people, 600000 fighting men besides women and children, and decrepit persons, came out of Egypt, and God destroyed them all in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua, and there it was that *Gods mercy prevailed over his justice*, that he did not destroy the Nation; but still preserved a succession to Jacob, to possesse the promise. God *drowned all the world except eight persons*, his mercy there also *prevailed over his justice*, that he preserved a remnant to mankind; his justice devoured all the world, and his mercy which preserved but eight, had the honour of the prevailing Attribute. God destroyed Sodom, and the five cities of the plain, and rescued but four from the flames of that sad burning, and of the four lost one in the flight, and yet his mercy prevailed over his justice, because he did not destroy all.

And in these sences we are to understand the excellency of the Divine Mercy: even when he smites, when *he rebukes us for sinne*, when he makes *our beauty to fade*, and *our flesh to consume away like a moth fretting a garment*, yet then his mercy is the prevailing ingredient. If his judgements be but fines set upon our heads according to the mercy of our old Lawes, *Salva continentia*, so as to preserve our estates, to continue our hopes and possibilities of heaven; and all the other judgements can be nothing but mercies, excellent instruments of grace, arts to make us sober, wise, to take off from our vanity, to restrain our wildnesses, which if they were left unbridled would set all the world on fire, Gods judgements are like the censures of the Church, in which a sinner is delivered over to Satan to be buffeted, *that he spirit may be saved*; the result of all this, is, that Gods mercies are not, ought not, cannot be,

- A be, instruments of confidence to sin, because the very purpose of his mercy is to the contrary, and the very manner of his Economy and dispensation is such, that Gods mercie goes along in complexion and conjunction with his judgements; the riches of his forbearance is this, that he forbears to throw us into hell, and sends the mercies of his rod to chide us unto repentance, and the mercies of his rod to punish us for having sinned, and that when we have sinned we may never think our selves secured, nor ever be reconciled to such dangers and deadly poisons. This, this is the manner of the Divine mercy. Go now fond man, and because God is mercifull presume to sinne, as having grounds to hope that thou mayest sin and be safe all the way. If this hope (shall I call it) or sordid flattery could be reasonable, then the mercies of God would not lead us to repentance; so unworthy are we in the sense and largeness of a wide fortune and pleasant accident. For impunity was never a good argument to make men to obey laws, *quotusquisque reperitur qui impunitate proposita astinere possit injurijs? Impunitas est maxima peccandi illecebra* said Cicero, and therefore the wisdom of God hath so ordered the actions of the world, that the most fruitfull showres shall be wrapped up in a cover of black clouds, that health shall be conveyed by bitter and ill-tasted drugs, that the temples of our bodies shall be purged by whips, and that the cords of the whip shall be the cords of love to draw us from the intanglings of vanity and folly. This is *the long suffering of God*, the last remedy to our diseased souls, and *avalant q' est mille mdr i mperit* said Phalaris, unlesse we be senselesse wee shall be brought to sober courses, by all those sad accidents and wholesome, but ill-tasting mercies, which we feel in all the course and the succession of the Divine long-sufferance.
- D The use of all the premises is, that which Saint Paul expresses in the text, that *wee do not despise all this*: and he onely despises not, who serves the ends of GOD in all these designs of mercy, that is, he that repents him of his sins. But there are a great many despisers, all they that live in their sins, they that have more blessings then they can reckon hours in their lives, that are courted by the Divine favour and wooed to salvation, as if mankind were to give, not to receive so great a blessing, all they that answer not to so friendly summons, they are despisers of Gods mercies: and although God overflowes with mercies, and does not often leave us to the onely hopes of being cured by unctions and gentle cataplasmes, but proceeds further, and gives us stibium or prepared steel, sharp arrows of his anger, and the sword, and the hand of sickness, yet wee are not sure of so much favour as to bee entertained longer in GODS hospital, but may bee thrust forth among the *incurabili*. Plutarch reports concerning swine, that their optick nerves are so disposed to turne their eyes down-
- E wards

SERMON.
XII.

wards that they cannot look upwards, nor behold the face of heaven unlesse they be thrown upon their backs. Such Swine are we, we seldom can look up to Heaven till GOD by his judgements throws us upon our backs; till he humbles us and softens us with showers of our own blood, and tears of sorrow: and yet God hath not promised that he will do so much for us; but for ought we know as soon as ever the Devil enters into our swinish and brutish hearts, we shall run down the hill and perish in the floods and seas of intolerable miserie; and therefore besides that, it is a huge folly in us that we will not be cured with pleasant medicines, but must be longing for Colliquintida and for vomits, for knives and poniards instead of the gentle showers of the divine refreshments, besides that this is an imprudence and sottishnesse, we do infinitely put it to the venture whether we shall be in a saveable condition or no, after the rejection of the first state of mercies. But however, then begins the first step of the judgement, and pungent misery, wee are perishing people, or if not, yet at the least not to be cured without the abscission of a member, without the cutting off a hand or leg; or the putting out of an eye: we must be cut to, take the stone out of our hearts, and that is a state of a very great infelicity: and if we scape the stone, wee cannot escape the Surgeons knife; if we scape death, yet we have a sicknesse; and though that be a great mercy in respect of death, yet it is as great a misery in respect of health: and that is the first punishment for the despite done to the first, and most sensible mercies: we are fallen into a sicknesse, that cannot be cured but by disease and hardship.

But if this despite runs further, and when the mercies look on us with an angry countenance, and that God gives us onely the mercy of a punishment, if we despise this too, we increase but our misery as we increase our sinne: the summe of which is this; that if Pharaoh will not be cured by one plague, he shall have ten, and if ten will not do it, the great and tenth wave, which is farre bigger then all the rest, the severest and the last arrow of the quiver, then we shall perish in the Red-sea, the sea of flames and blood, in which the ungodly shall roul eternally.

But some of these despisers are such as are unmoved when God smites others; like Gallio, when the Jews took Sosthenes and bear him in the pleading place; he cared for none of these things; he was not concerned in that interest; and many Gallio's there are amongst us, that understand it not to be a part of the Divine Method of Gods *long sufferance* to strike others to make us afraid. But however we sleep in the midst of such alarms, yet know, that there is not one death in all the neighbourhood, but is intended to thee; every crowling of the cock is to awake thee

to

A to repentance: and if thou sleepest still, the next turn may be
thine; God will send his Angel as he did to Peter, and smite thee
on thy side, and wake thee from thy dead sleep of sinne and sottish-
nesse. But beyond this, some are despisers still, and hope to drown
the noises of mount Sinai, the sound of Canons, of Thunders, and
lightnings, with a counternoise of revelling and clamorous roar-
ings, with merry meetings; like the sacrifices to Moloch, they
found drums and trumpets, that they might not hear the sad shriek-
ings of their children as they were dying in the cavity of the
brazen Idoll, and when their conscience strikes out or murmurs
B in a sad melancholy; or something that is dear to them is smit-
ten, they attempt to drown it in a sea of drink, in the heathenish
noises of idle and drunken company; and that which God sends to
lead them to repentance, leads them to a tavern, not to refresh their
needs of nature, or for ends of a tolerable civility, or innocent
purposes, but like the condemned persons among the Levantines,
they tasted wine freely, that they might die and be insensible. I
could easily reprove such persons with an old Greek Proverb men-
tioned by Plutarch, *ὅτι ὁ ἐνδυμίας ἐτε ποδὶ γυῖας ἀπὸ πλ. ἀπὸ ἡγ. καὶ τῆς*. You
shall ill be cured of the knotted Gout, if you have nothing else
C but a wide shoe: But this reproof is too gentle for so great a
madnesse: it is not onely an incompetent cure, to apply the plai-
ster of a sinne or vanity, to cure the smart of a divine judgement,
but it is a great increaser of the misery, by swelling the cause to big-
ger, and monstrous proportions. It is just as if an impatient fool,
feeling the smart of his medicine, shall tear his wounds open and
throw away the instruments of his cure, because they bring him
health at the charge of a little pain, *ἔργος καὶ πάλιν πῶς μαθήσῃς*. He that
is full of stripes and troubles, and decked round about with thorns;
he is neer to God; But he, that because hee sits uneasily when he
D sits neer the King that was crowned with thorns, shall remove
thence, or strew flowers, roses, and Jessamine, the downe of
thistles, and the softest Gossamere, that he may die without pain,
die quietly and like a lamb, sink to the bottom of hell without
noise, this man is a fool, because he accepts death, if it arrest him
in civil language, is content to die by the sentence of an eloquent
Judge, and prefers a quiet passage to hell, before going to heaven in
a storm.

E That Italian Gentleman was certainly a great lover of his
sleep, who was angry with the lizard that wak't him, when a
Viper was creeping into his mouth: when the Devil is entring in-
to us to poison our spirits, and steal our souls away while we are
sleeping in the lethargie of sinne, God sends his sharp messages to
awaken us, and we call that the enemy, and use arts to cure the
remedy, not to cure the disease. There are some persons that
will never be cured, not because the sicknesse is incurable, but
P because

SERMON
XII.

Eſay 1.4.5

Eſay 5.5.

Acts 13.14.

because they have ill-stomacks and cannot keep the medicine: A
 Just so is his case that so despises GODS method of curing him,
 by these instances of long-sufferance, that he uses all the arts he
 can to be quit of his Physitian, and to spill his physick, and to
 take cordials as soon as his vomit begins to work. There is no
 more to be said in this affair, but to read the poor wretches sen-
 tence, and to declare his condition. As at first, when he despised
 the first great mercies, GOD sent him sharpnesses and sad acci-
 dents to ensober his spirits: So now that he despises this mer-
 cy also, the mercy of the rod, GOD will take it away from
 him, and then I hope all is well! Miserable man that thou art! B
 this is thy undoing; if GOD ceases to strike thee because thou
 wilt not mend, thou art sealed up to ruine, and reprobation for
 ever: The Physitian hath given thee over, hee hath no kindnesse
 for thee. This was the desperate estate of Judah. *Ab sinfull na-
 tion, a people laden with iniquity, they have forsaken the Lord, they have
 provoked the Holy One of Is-ael; why should yee bee stricken any more?*
 This is the *ardua magna*, the most bitter curse, the greatest ex-
 communication, when the delinquent is become a Heathen and a
 Publicane without the covenant, out of the pale of the Church;
 the Church hath nothing to do with them: *for what have I to do
 with them that are without?* said Saint Paul: It was not lawfull C
 for the Church any more to punish them; and this court Christi-
 an is an imitation and paralell of the justice of the court of hea-
 ven: When a sinner is not mended by judgements at long running,
 God cuts him off from his inheritance, and the lot of sons, hee will
 chastise him no more, but let him take his course and spend his
 portion of prosperity, such as shall be allowed him in the great
 Oeconomy of the World. Thus God did to his Vineyard which he
 took such pains to fence, to plant, to manure, to dig, to cut, and to
 prune: and when after all, it brought forth wild grapes, the last D
 and worst of Gods anger was this, *Anseram sepem ejus*, God had
 fenced it with a hedge of thorns, and God would take away all that
 hedge, he would not leave a thorn standing, not one judgement
 to reprove or admonish them, but all the wild beasts, and wilder and
 more beastly lusts, may come and devour it, and trample it down in
 scorn.

And now what shall I say, but those words quoted by Saint
 Peter in his Sermon: *Behold yee despisers, and wonder, and perish;*
 perish in your own folly by stubbornnesse and ingratitude. For it
 is a huge contradiction to the nature and designs of God; God E
 calls us, we refuse to hear; he invites us with fair promises, wee
 hear and consider not; he gives us blessings, we take them and un-
 derstand not his meaning: we take out the token, but read not the
 letter: then he threatens us, and wee regard not; hee strikes our
 neighbours, and we are not concerned; then he strikes us gently,
 but

A but we feel it not; then he does like the Physitian in the Greek Epigram, who being to cure a man of a Lethargy, locked him into the same room with a mad-man, that he by dry-beating him, might make him at least sensible of blows; but this makes us instead of running to God, to trust in unskillfull Physicians, or like Saul to run to a Pythoniffe, we run for cure to a crime, we take sanctuary in a pleasant sin; just as if a man to cure his melancholy should desire to be stung with a Tarantula, that at least he may die merrily; what is there more to be done that God hath not yet done? he is forced at last to break off with a *Curavimus Babylonem & non est sanata*,
B we dressed and tended Babylon, but she was incurable; there is no help but such persons must die in their sins, and lie down in eternall sorrow,

C



D

P 2

Serm-

E



Sermon. XLV.

Of Growth in Grace.

2. Pet. 3. 18.

But grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.



When Christianity like the day spring from the East, with a new light did not onely enlighten the world, but amazed the mindes of men, and entertained their curiosities, and seized upon their warmer and more pregnant affections, it was no wonder that whole Nations were converted at a Sermon, and multitudes were instantly professed, and their understandings followed their affections, and their wills followed their understandings, and they were convinced by miracle, and overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal, and wisely governed by their Guides, and ravished with the sanctity of the Doctrine, and the holinesse of their examples: And this was not onely their duty, but a great instance of providence, that by the great religion and piety of the first Professors, Christianity might be firmly planted, and unshaken by scandall, and hardened by persecution; and that these first lights might be actuall Precedents for ever, and Copies for us to transcribe in all descending ages of Christianity, that thither we might run to fetch oil,

A oil, to enkindle our extinguished lamps. But then piety was so universal, that it might well be enjoined by Saint Paul, that if a brother walked disorderly, the Christians should avoid his company: He forbade them not, to accompany with the Heathens that walked disorderly; for then a man must have gone out of the world. But they were not to endure so much as to eat with, or to salute a disorderly brother, and ill-living Christian: But now if we should observe this canon of Saint Paul, and refuse to eat, or to converse with a fornicator, or a drunkard, or a perjured person, or covetous, we must also go out of the world; for a pious or a holy person is now as rare, as a disorderly Christian was at first: and as Christianity is multiplied every where in name and title, so it is destroyed in life, essence, and proper operation; and we have very great reason to fear, that Christs name will serve us to no end but to upbraid our baseness; and his person onely to be our Judge, and his lawes as so many bills of accusation, and his graces and helps offered us, but as aggravations of our unworthiness; and our baptism, but an occasion of vow-breach; and the holy Communion, but an act of hypocrisie, formality, or sacrilege; and all the promises of the Gospel but as pleasant dreams; and the threatnings but as arts of affrightment; for Christianity lasted pure and zealous, it kept its rules, and observed its own lawes for three hundred years, or thereabouts; so long the Church remained a Virgin: For so long they were warmed with their first fires, and kept under discipline by the rod of persecution; but it hath declined almost fourteen hundred years together: prosperity and pride, wantonness and great fortunes, ambition and interest, false doctrine upon mistake, and upon designe, the malice of the Devil, and the arts of all his instruments, the want of zeal, and a weariness of spirit, filthy examples, and a disreputation of piety, and a strict life; seldome precedents, and infinite discouragements have caused so infinite a declension of piety and holy living, that what Papirius Massonius one of their own, said of the Popes of Rome; *In pontificibus nemo hodie sanctitatem requirit, optimi putantur si vel leviter mali sint, vel minus boni quam ceteri mortales esse solent* No man looks for holiness in the Bishops of Rome; those are the best Popes who are not extremly wicked: the same is too true of the greatest part of Christians: Men are excellent persons if they be not traitors, or adulterous, oppressors, or injurious, drunkards, or scandalous, if they be not as this publican, as the vilest person with whom they converse:

*Nunc si depositum non inficiatur amicus,
Si reddat veterem cum totâ erugine fellam
Prodigia fides & Thuscis digna libellis,
Queque coronatâ lustrari debeat aquâ.*

Juven. Sat. 13.

SER. XIV.

He that is better then the dregs of his own age, whose religion is something above prophanenesse, and whose sobriety is a step or two from down-right intemperance, whose discourse is not swearing, nor yet apt to edifie, whose charity is set out in pity, and a gentle yerning and saying, [*God help*] whose alms are contemptible, and his devotion infrequent, yet as things are now, he is *unus e millibus*, one of a thousand, and he stands eminent and conspicuous in the valleys and lower grounds of the present piety; for a bank is a mountain upon a leuell; but what is rare and eminent in the manners of men this day, would have been scandalous, and have deserved the rod of an Apostle, if it had been confronted with the fervours and rare devotion and religion of our fathers in the Gospel.

Men of old looked upon themselves as they stood by the examples and precedents of Martyrs, and compared their piety to the life of Saint Paul, and estimated their zeal by the flames of the Boanerges, Saint James and his brother: and the Bishops were thought reproveable as they fell short of the ordinary government of Saint Peter, and Saint John: and the assemblies of Christians were so holy, that every meeting had religion enough to hallow a house and convert it to a Church; and every day of feasting was a Communion, and every fasting day was a day of *repentance and alms*: and every day of thanksgiving was a day of *joy, and alms*: and religion begun all their actions, and prayer consecrated them, and they ended in charity, and were not polluted with designe: they despised the world heartily, and pursued after heaven greedily; they knew no ends but to serve God, and to be saved; and had no designs upon their neighbours, but to lead them to God, and to felicity; till Satan full of envy to see such excellent dayes, mingled covetousnesse, and ambition within the throngs and conventions of the Church, and a vice crept into an office, and then the mutuall confidence grew lesse, and so *charity was lessened*; and heresies crept in; and then *faith began to be sullied*, and *pride* crept in; and then men snatched at offices, not for the work, but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more then God and the Church; till at last it came to the passe where now it is, that the Clergy live lives no better then the Laity, and the Laity are stooped to imitate the evil customes of strangers and enemies of Christianity: so that we should think Religion in a good condition, if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an *ordinary, even, and just life*, without the scandal and allayes of a great impiety: But because such is the nature of things, that either they grow towards perfection, or decline towards dissolution: There is no proper way to secure it but by setting its growth forward: for religion hath no station, or naturall periods: if it does not grow better, it grows much worse, not that it alwayes returns the man into scandalous sins, but that it establisshes and fixes him

in

A in a state of indifferency and luke-warmnesse: and he is more averse to a state of improvement, and dies in an incurious, ignorant and unrelenting condition.

But grow in grace] Thats the remedy, and that would make us all wise and happy, blessed in this world, and sure of heaven: Concerning which, we are to consider first: what the estate of grace is into which every one of us must be entred, that we may grow in it: secondly the proper parts, acts, and offices of growing in grace, 3. The signes, consequences, and proper significations, by which if we cannot perceive *the growing*, yet afterwards we may perceive that *we are grown*, and so judge of the state of our duty, and concerning our finall condition of being saved.

B
C
D
E
1. Concerning the state of grace, I consider that no man can be said to be in the state of grace, who retains an affection to any one sin. The state of pardon and the divine favour, begins at the first instance of anger against our crimes, when we leave our fondnesses and kinde opinions, when we excuse them not, and will not endure their shame; when we feeble the smarts of any of their evil consequents; for he that is a perfect lover of sin, and is *sealed up to a reprobate sense*, endures all that sin brings along with it, and is reconciled to all its mischiefs, can suffer the sickness of his own drunkenness, and yet call it pleasure, he can wait like a slave to serve his lust, and yet count it no disparagement; he can suffer the dishonour of being accounted a base and dishonest person, and yet look confidently, and think himself no worse. But when the grace of God begins to work upon a mans spirit, it makes the conscience nice and tender, and although the sin as yet does not displease the man, but he can endure the flattering and alluring part, yet he will not endure to be used so ill by his sin; he will not be abused and dishonoured by it; But because God hath so allayed the pleasures of his sin, that he that drinks the sweet should also strain the dregs through his throat, by degrees Gods grace doth irreconcile the convert, and discovers, first its base attendance, then its worse consequents, then the displeasure of God, that here commences the first resolutions of leaving the sin, and trying if in the service of God, his spirit and the whole appetite of man may be better entertained. He that is thus far entred shall quickly perceive the difference, and meet arguments enough to invite him further; For then God treats the man as he treated the spies, that went to discover the land of promise; he ordered the year in plenty, and directed them to a pleasant and a fruitful place, and prepared bunches of grapes of a miraculous and prodigious greatness, that they might report good things of Canaan, and invite the whole nation to attempt its conquest: so Gods grace represents to the new converts and the weak ones in faith the pleasures and first deliciousnesses of religion: and when they

SER. XIV. they come to spie the good things of that way that leads to heaven, A
 they presently perceive themselves eased of the load of an evil
 conscience, of their fears of death, of the confusion of their shame,
 and Gods spirit gives them a cup of sensible comfort, and makes
 them to rejoyce in their prayers, and weep with pleasures ming-
 led with innocent passions, and religious changes; and although
 God does not deal with all men in the same method, or in manners
 that can regularly be described, and all men do not feel, or do
 not observe, or cannot for want of skill discern such accidental
 sweetneses, and pleasant grapes at his first entrance into religion:
 yet God to every man does minister excellent arguments of invi- B
 tation, and such that if a man will attend to them, they will cer-
 tainly move either his affections or his will, his fancy or his rea-
 son, and most commonly both: But while the spirit of God is
 doing this work of man, man must also be *swiety & re deū a fellow*
worker with God, he must entertain the spirit, attend his inspirati-
 ons, receive his whispers, obey all his motions, invite him fur-
 ther, and utterly renounce all confederacy with his enemy, sin;
 at no hand suffering any *root of bitternesse to spring up*, not allow-
 ing to himself any reserve of carnall pleasure, no clancular lust,
 no private oppressions, no secret covetousnesse, no love to this C
 world that may discompose his duty; for if a man prayes all day
 and at night is intemperate, if he spends his time in reading, and
 his recreation be sinful, if he studies religion, and practises self
 interest; if he leaves his swearing and yet retaines his pride; if he
 becomes chaste and yet remains peevish and imperious; this man
 is not changed from the state of sin, into the first stage of the state
 of grace: he does at no hand belong to God, he hath suffered him-
 self to be scared from one sin, and tempted from another by in-
 terest, and hath left a third, by reason of his inclination, and a fourth
 for shame, or want of opportunity: But the spirit of God hath not D
 yet planted one perfect plant there; God may make use of the acci-
 dentally prepared advantages: But as yet the spirit of God hath not
 begun the proper and direct work of grace in his heart; But when we
 leave every sin, when we resolve never to return to the chaines, when
 we have no love for the world, but such as may be a servant of
 God; then I account that we are entred into a state of grace, from
 whence I am now to begin to reckon the commencement of this
 precept, *grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus*
Christ.

2. And now the first part of this duty is *to make religion to be* E
the businesse of our lives; for this is the great instrument, which
 will naturally produce our growth in grace, and the perfection of
 a Christian. For a man cannot after a state of sin be instantly a
 Saint; the work of heaven is not done by a flash of lightning, or a
 dath of affectionate raine, or a few tears of a relenting pity; God
 and

A and his Church have appointed holy intervals, and have taken portions of our time for religion, that we may be called off from the world; and remember the end of our creation, and do honour to God, and think of heaven with hearty purposes and peremptory designs to get thither. But as we must not neglect those times which God hath reserved for his service, or the Church hath prudently decreed, nor yet act religion upon such dayes with forms and outsidings, or to comply with customs; or to seem religious; so we must take care that all the other portions of our time be hallowed with little retirements of our thoughts, and short conversations with God: and

B all along be guided with a holy intention, that even our works of nature may passe into the relations of grace, and the actions of our calling may help towards the obtaining *the price of our high calling*: while our eatings are actions of temperance, our labours are profitable, our humiliations are acts of obedience, and our almes are charity: our marriages are chaste, and *whether we eat or drink, sleep or wake, we may do all to the glory of God, by a direct intuition, or by a reflex act, by designe, or by supplement, by foresight, or by an after election*: and to this purpose we must not look upon religion as our trouble, and our hinderance: nor think almes chargeable or expensive: nor our fastings vexatious and burdensom: nor our prayers a wearinesse of spirit: But we must make these and all other

C the duties of religion, our employments, our care the work and end for which we came into the world: and remember that we never do the work of men, nor serve the ends of God, nor are in the proper employment and businesse of our life, but when we worship God, or live like wise or sober persons, or do benefit to our brother.

I will not turne this discourse into a reproofe, but leave it represented as a duty: Remember that God sent you into the world for religion; we are but to passe through our pleasant fields, or

D our hard labours; but to lodge a little while in our faire palaces or our meaner cottages; but to bait in the way at our full tables or with our spare diet; but then onely man does his proper employment, when he prayes and does charity, and mortifies his unruly appetites, and restrains his violent passions, and becomes like to God, and imitates his holy Son, and writes after the copies of Apostles and Saints. Then he is dressing himself for eternity, where he must dwell or abide, either in an excellent beatifical country, or in a prison of amazement and eternal horroure: And after all this, you may if you please call to minde, how much

E time you allow to God and to your soule every day, or every moneth, or in a year if you please; for I fear the account of the time is soon made; but the account for the neglect, will be harder. And it will not easily be answered, that all our dayes and years are little enough to attend perishing things, and to be swallowed

SER. XIV.

lowed up in avaritious and vain attendances, and we shall not attend to religion with a zeal so great as is our revenge, or as is the hunger of one meal. Without much time, and a wary life, and a diligent circumspection, we cannot mortifie our sins, or do the first works of grace. I pray God we be not found to have grown like the sinews of old age, from strength to remissness, from thence to dissolution, and infirmity, and death; Menedemus was wont to say that the young boyes that went to Athens the first year were *wisemen*, the second year, *Philosophers*, the third, *Orators*, and the fourth were but *Plebeians*, and understood nothing but their own ignorance.

And just so it happens to some in the progresses of religion: at first they are violent and active; and then they satiate all the appetites of religion; and that which is left, is, that they were soon weary, and sat down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the businesse of pride, or mony; and by this time they understand that their religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth, to the coldness and infirmities of old age; The remedies of which is onely a diligent spirit and a busie religion, a great industry and a full portion of time in holy offices; that as the Oracle said to the Cirrheans, *noctes diesque belligerandum*, they could not be happy unless they waged war night and day: that is, unless we perpetually fight against our own vices; and repel our Ghostly enemies, and stand upon our guard, we must stand for ever in the state of babes, in Christ, or else return to the first imperfections of an unchristened soul, and an un sanctified spirit. Thats the first particular.

2. The second step of our growth in grace is, *when vertues grow habitual*, apt and easie in our manners and dispositions. For although many new converts have a great zeal, and a busie spirit, apt enough as they think to contest against all the difficulties of a spiritual life, yet they meet with such powerful oppositions from without, and a false heart within, that their first heats are soon broken, and either they are for ever discouraged, or are forced to march more slowly and proceed more temperately for ever after.

Τὴν δὲ τὴν κακότητα καὶ ἡλάρησιν ἐλπίδι
Πνιθόμενος ἐλπίσιν καὶ ὁδοῖς, μακάρι δ' ἔγγυθι τῆς αἰῆτος.

It is an easie thing to commit a wickedness, for temptation and infirmity are always too neer us: But God hath made care and sweat, prudence and diligence, experience and watchfulness, wisdom and labour at home, and good guides abroad to be instruments and means to purchase vertue.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progresse and pursuit we finde all the knots made plain, and the rough wayes made smooth.

jam

A *jam monte potius
Ridet;*

Now, the spirit of grace is like a new soul within him, and he hath new appetites and new pleasures, when the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of Religion are delicious; when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, or in very inconsiderable instances, and stay not at all, but are reproached with a penitentiall sorrow, and speedy amendment; when we do actions of vertue quickly, frequently, and with delight: then we have grown in grace in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin: they dare not omit their hours of prayer; and they are restless in their spirits till they have done; but they go to it as to execution; they stay from it as long as they can, and they drive like Pharaohs charrets with the wheels off, sadly and heavily: and besides that such persons have reserved to themselves, the best part of their sacrifice, and do not give their will to God, they do not love him with all their heart; they are also soonest tempted to retire and fall off.

C *Sextius Romanus* resigned the honours and offices of the city, and betook himself to the severity of a Philosophical life. But when his unusuall diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propositions smart, and that which was fine in discourse at a Symposiack, or an Academical dinner, began to sit uneasily upon him in the practise; he so despaired that hee had like to have cast himself into the sea, to appease the labours of his religion; Because he never had gone further then to think it a fine thing to be a wise man: he would commend it, but hee was loth to pay for it at the price that God and the Philosopher set upon it. But he that is grown in grace, and hath made religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new-man, he rests in religion, and comforts his sorrows with thinking of his prayers, and in all crosses of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when he list, for he cares not so he may serve God: and if you make him poor here, he is rich there, and he counts that to be his proper service, his work, his recreation, and reward.

E 3. But because in the course of holy living, although the duty be regular and constant, yet the sensible relishes and the flowings of affections, the zeal and the visible expressions do not alwayes make the same emission; but sometimes by designe, and sometimes by order, sometimes by affection wee are more busie, more intire, and more intent upon the actions of religion; in such cases we are to judge of our growth in grace, if after every interval of extraordinary piety, the next return be more devout and more affection-

SERMON
XIV.

affectionate, the labour be more cheerfull and more active; and if A
 religion returns oftner and stays longer in the same expressions,
 and leaves more satisfaction upon the spirit. Are your communions
 more frequent? and when they are, do yee approach
 neerer to God? have you made firmer resolutions, and entertained
 more hearty purposes of amendment? Do you love God more
 dutifully and your neighbour with a greater charity? Do you not
 so easily return to the world as formerly? Are not you glad when
 the thing is done? do you go to your secular accounts, with a more
 weaned affection then before? If you communicate well, it is cer-
 tain, that you will still do it better: if you do not communicate well, B
 every opportunity of doing it is but a new trouble, easily excused,
 readily omitted, done because it is necessary, but not because wee
 love it; and we shall finde that such persons in their old age, do it
 worst of all; And it was observed by a Spanish Confessor, who
 was also a famous Preacher, that in persons not very religious, the
 confessions which they made upon their death-bed, were the cold-
 est, the most imperfect, and with lesse contrition then all that he had
 observed them to make in many yeers before. For so the Canes
 of Egypt when they newly arise from their bed of mud and slime
 of Nilus, start up into an equall and continuall length, and are inter-
 rupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous with great C
 distances, and intervals: but when they are grown to their full
 length, they lessen into the point of a Pyramis, and multiply their
 knots and joynts, interrupting the finenesse and smoothnesse of its
 body: so are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in
 grace: at first when he springs up from his impurity, by the wa-
 ters of baptisme and repentance, he growes straight and strong,
 and suffers but few interruptions of piety, and his constant cour-
 ses of religion are but rarely intermitted; till they ascend up to a
 full age or towards the ends of their life, then they are weak and D
 their devotions often intermitted, and their breaches are frequent,
 and they seek excuses, and labour for dispensations, and love
 God and religion lesse and lesse, till their old age instead of a crown
 of their vertue and perseverance ends in levitie and unprofitable
 courses; light and uselesse as the tufted feathers upon the cane,
 everie winde can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make
 it usefull. When therefore our pietie interrupts its greater and more
 solemn expressions, and upon the return of the greater offices, and
 bigger solemnities, wee finde them to come upon our spirits like
 the wave of a tide, which retired onely because it was naturall so E
 to do, and yet came further upon the strand at the next rolling:
 When every new confession, every succeeding communion, every
 time of separation for more solemn and intense prayer is better
 spent and more affectionate, leaving a greater relish upon the
 spirit, and possessing greater portions of our affections, our reason
 son

A son, and our choice, then we may give God thanks, who hath given us more grace to use that grace, and a blessing to endeavour our duty, and a blessing upon our endeavour.

4. To discern our growth in grace, we must inquire concerning our passions, whether they be mortified and quiet, complying with our ends of vertue and under command. For since the passions are the matter of vertue and vice respectively, he that hath brought into his power all the strengths of the enemy, and the forts from whence he did infest him, he onely hath secured his holy walking with God. But because this thing is never perfectly done, and yet must alwayes be doing, grace grows according as we have finished our portions of this work. And in this we must not onely enquire concerning our passions, whether they be sinfull and habitually prevalent; for if they be, we are not in the state of grace: But whether they return upon us in violences and undecencies, in transportation and unreasonable, and imprudent expressions; for although a *good man* may be incident to a violent passion, and that without sin, yet a *perfect man* is not; a well-grown Christian hath seldom such sufferings; to suffer such things sometimes may stand with the *being of vertue*, but not with its *security*: For if passions range up and down and transport us frequently and violently, we may keep in our forts, and in our dwellings, but our enemy is master of the field, and our vertues are restrained, and apt to be starved, and will not hold out long; a *good man* may be spotted with a violence, but a *wise man* will not: and he that does not adde *wisdom* to his *vertue*, the *knowledge of Jesus Christ* to his vertuous habits will be a good man but till a storm comes. But beyond this, inquire after the state of your passions, in actions of religion: Some men fast to mortifie their lust, and their fasting makes them peevish: some reprove a vice but they do it with much impatience; some charitably give excellent counsell, but they do that also with a pompous and proud spirit; and passion being driven from open hostilities, is forced to march along in the retinue and troops of vertue: And although this be rather a deception and a cosenage than an imperfection: and supposes a state of sin rather than an imperfect grace: yet because it tacitly and secretly creeps along among the circumstances of pious actions, as it spoils a vertue in some, so it lessens it in others, and therefore is considerable also in this question.

E And although no man must take account of his *being in, or out of the state of grace*, by his being dispassionate, and free from all the assaults of passion, yet as to the securing his being in the state of grace, he must provide that he be not a slave of passion, so to *declare his growth in grace*, he must be sure to take the measures of his affections, and see that they be lessened: more apt to be suppressed: not breaking out to inconvenience and imprudencies,

SER. XIV.

not rising our spirit and drawing us from our usuall and more sober tempers. Try therefore if your fear be turned into caution, your lust into chaste friendships, your imperious spirit into prudent government, your revenge into justice, your anger into charity, and your peevishnesse and rage, into silence and suppression of language. Is our ambition changed into vertuous and noble thoughts? can we emulate without envy? is our covetousnesse lessened into good husbandry, and mingled with alms, that we may certainly discern the love of money to be gone? do we leave to despise our inferiours, and can we willingly endure to admit him that exels us in any gift or grace whatsoever, and to commend it without abatement, and mingling allayes with the commendation, and disparagement to the man? If we be arrived but thus farre, it is well, and we must go further. But we use to think that all disaffections of the body are removed, if they be changed into the more tolerable, although we have not an athletick health, or the strength of porters or wrestlers. For although it be felicity to be quit of all passion, that may be sinfull or violent; and part of the happinesse of heaven shall consist in that freedom; yet our growth in grace consists in the remission and lessening of our passions: onely he that is incontinent in his lust, or in his anger, in his desires of money, or of honour, in his revenge, or in his fear, in his joyes, or in his sorrows, that man is not grown at all in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: This onely; in the scrutiny and consequent judgement concerning our passions, it will concern the curiosity of our care, to watch against passions in the reflex act; against pride, or lust, complacency, and peevishnesse attending upon vertue. For he was noted for a vain person, who being overjoyed for the cure of his pride (as he thought) cried out to his wife, *Cerne Dionysia depasui fastum, behold I have laid aside all my pride*: and of that very dream the silly man thought he had reason to boast; but considered not that it was an act of pride, and levity besides. If thou hast given a noble present to thy friend, if thou hast rejected the unjust desire of thy Prince; if thou hast endured thirst and hunger for religion or continence; if thou hast refused an offer like that which was made to Joseph, sit down and rest in thy good conscience, and do not please thyself in opinions, and phantastick noises abroad, and do not despise him that did not do so as thou hast done; and reprove no man with an upbraiding circumstance: for it will give thee but an ill return, and a contemptible reward; if thou shalt over-lay thy infant vertue; or drown it with a flood of breast-milk.

Sermon

Sermon XV.

Of Growth in Grace.

Part II.

HE is well grown in, or towards the state of grace, who is more patient of a sharp reproof, then of a secret flattery. For a reprehension contains so much mortification to the pride and complacencies of a man; is so great an affront to an easie and undisturbed person, is so empty of pleasure, and so full of profit, that he must needs love vertue in a great degree, who can take in that which onely serves her end and is displeasing to himself, and all his gayeties. A severe reprehender of anothers vice, comes dressed like Jacob when he went to cozen his brother of the blessing: his outside is rough and hairy, but the voice is Jacobs voice; rough hands, and a healthfull language get the blessing, even against the will of him that shall feel it; but he that is *patient*, and *even*, not apt to excuse his fault, that is lesse apt to anger, or to scorne him that snatches him rudely from the flames of hell, he is vertues Confessor, and suffers these lesser stripes for that interest which will end in spirituall and eternall benedictions.

They who are furious against their monitors are incorrigible: but it is one degree of meeknesse to suffer discipline: and a meek man cannot easily be an ill man, especially in the present instance: he appears, at least, to have a healthfull constitution; he hath good flesh to heal; his spirit is capable of medicine, and that man can never be despaired of, who hath a disposition so neer his health as to improve all physick, and whose nature is relieved by every good accident from without. But that which I observe is, That this is not onely a good disposition towards repentance, and restitution, but is a signe of growth in grace, according as it becomes *naturall*, *easie*, and *habituall*. Some men chide themselves for all their

misdemeanours, because they would be represented to the censures and opinions of other men, with a fair Character, and such assured not to be reproved: others out of inconsideration sleep in their own dark rooms, and untill the charity of a Guide, or of a friend draws the curtain and lets in a beam of light, dream on untill the graves open, and hell devours them; But if they be called upon by the grace of God, let down with a sheet of counsels and friendly precepts, they are presently inclined to be obedient to the heavenly monitions, but unlesse they be dressed with circumstances of honour and civility, with arts of entertainment, and insinuation they are rejected utterly, or received unwillingly: Therefore although upon any termes, to endure a sharp reproof be a good signe of amendment; yet the growth of grace is not properly signified by every such sufferance: For when this disposition begins, amendment also begins, and goes on in proportion to the increment of this. To endure a reproof without adding a new sin is the first step to amendments, that is, to endure it without scorn, or hatred, or indignation. 2. The next is to suffer reproof without excusing our selves: For he that is apt to excuse himself is onely desirous in a civil manner to set the reproof aside, and to represent the charitable monitour to be too hasty in his judgement, and deceived in his information; and the fault to dwell there, not with himself. 3. Then he that proceeds in this instance admits the reprovers sermon, or discourse without a private regret: he hath no secret murmurs, or unwillingnesses to the humiliation, but is onely ashamed that he should deserve it: but for the reprehension it self, that troubles him not; but he looks on it as his own medicine, and the others charity. 4. But if to this he addes, that he voluntary confesses his own fault, and of his own accord vomits out the loads of his own intemperance, and eases his spirit of the infection, then it is certain he is not onely a professed and hearty enemy against sin, but a zealous, and a prudent, and an active person against all its interest; and never counts himself at ease but while he rests upon the banks of *Sion*, or at the gates of the temple; never pleased but in vertue and religion: Then he knows the state of his soul, and the state of his danger, he reckons it no objection to be abased in the face of man, so he may be gracious in the eyes of God: And that's a signe of a good grace, and a holy wisdom; *That man is grown in the grace of God, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Justus in principio sermonis est accusator sui*, said the Wise man, *The righteous accuseth himself in the beginning*: that is, quickly, lest he be prevented: And certain it is, he cannot be either wise or good, that had rather have a reall sin within him, then that a good man should beleieve him to be a repenting sinner; that had rather *keep his crime*, then *lose his reputation*; that is, rather to be so, then to

A *bee thought so*, rather be without the favour of God, then of his neighbour. Diogenes once spied a young man coming out of a Tavern, or place of entertainment; who perceiving himself observed by the Philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might (if possible) preserve his fame with that severe person. But Diogenes told him, *Quanto magis intraveris, tanto magis eris in cauponâ*: The more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen; and hee that conceals his sinne, still retains that which he counts his shame, and his burden. Hippocrates was noted for an ingenuous person, that he published and confessed his error concerning the futures of the head: and all ages since Saint Austin have called him *pious*, for writing his book of Retractions, in which he published his former ignorances and mistakes, and so set his shame off to the world, invested with a garment of modesty, and above half changed before they were seen. I did the rather insist upon this particu-
 B lar, because it is a consideration of huge concernment, and yet much neglected in all its instances and degrees. We neither confesse our shame, nor endure it; we are privately troubled, and publickly excuse it; we turn charity into bitterness, and our reproof into contumacy and scorne; and who is there amongst us that can endure a personall charge? or is not to be taught his personall duty, by generall discourings, by parable and apologue, by acts of insinuation and wary distances? but by this state of persons we know the estate of our own spirits.

C When God sent his Prophets to the people, and they stoned them with stones, and sawed them asunder, and cast them into dungeons, and made them beggers, the people fell into the condition of Babylon, *Quam curavimus & non est sanata: Wee healed her* (said the Prophets) *But shee would not bee cured: Derelinquamus eam* that's her doom; let her enjoy her sins, and all the fruits of sinne laid up in treasures of wrath against the day of vengeance and retribution.

D 6. Hee that is grown in grace, and the knowledge of Christ esteems no sin to be little or contemptible; none fit to be cherished or indulged to. For it is not onely inconsistent with the love of GOD, to entertain any undecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases him, but he alwayes remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things, whither the grace of God hath already brought him: He thinks of the prayers and teares, his restless nights, and his daily fears, his late escape, and his present danger, the ruines of his former state, and the difficult and imperfect reparations of this new; his proclivity and aptnesse to vice, and naturall avernesse and uneasie inclinations to the strictnesse of holy living; and when these are considered truly, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any begin-
 E nings

SERMON
XV.

nings of a state of life contrary to that which with so much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies he hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for heaven: (and so it must be) for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say as Lot did when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, *Alas Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?* And it is not therefore to be entertained because it is little; for it is the more without excuse, if it be little; the temptations to it are not great; the allurements not mighty; the promises not insnaring, the resistance easie; and a wise man considers, it is a greater danger to bee overcome by a little sin, then by a great one; *a greater danger* (I say) not directly, but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person: for he that cannot overcome a small crime, is in the state of infirmity, so great, that he perishes infallibly, when he is arrested by the sins of a stronger temptation: But he that easily can, and yet will not; he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kisse the apples of Paradise, or feast himself with the parings: since he is by some displeasing instrument affrighted from glutting himself with the forbidden fruit, in ruder and bigger instances: But the well-grown Christian is curious of his newly trimmed soul, and like a nice person with clean clothes, is carefull that no spot or stain sully the virgin whitenesse of his robe: whereas another whose *albes of baptisme* are sullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what paths he treads, and a shower of dirt changes not his state, who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity; It makes men negligent and easie, when they have an opinion or certain knowledge that they are persons extraordinary in nothing; that a little care will not mend them; that another sin cannot make them much worse: But it is a signe of a tender conscience, and a reformed spirit, when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit upon its guard; when too free a metrimment is wiped off with a sigh and a sad thought, and a severe recollection and a holy prayer: Polycletus was wont to say, That they had work enough to do, who were to make a curious picture of clay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar: A mans spirit is naturally carelesse of baser and uncostly materials; but if a man be to work in gold, then he will save the filings, and his dust, and suffer not a grain to perill: And when a man hath laid his foundations in precious stones, hee will not build vile matter, stubble and dirt upon it: So it is in the spirit of a man: If he have built upon the rock Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good stature in Christ, he will not

A not easily dishonour his building nor lose his labours, by an incurious entertainment of vanities, and little instances of sin; which as they can never satisfie any lust or appetite to sin; so they are like a flie in a box of ointment, or like little follies to a wise man, they are extreemly full of dishonour and disparagement, they disarray a mans soul of his vertue, and dishonour him for cockle-shells and bables, and tempt to a greater folly: which every man, who is grown in the knowledge of Christ, therefore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse, with a fear as great as his hopes of heaven are, and knows that the entertainment of small sins do but entice a mans resolutions to disband, they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in death.

B 7. He that is grown in grace pursues vertue for its own interest, purely and simply without the mixture and allay of collateral designs, and equally inclining purposes; God in the beginning of our returns to him entertains us with promises and threatnings, the apprehensions of temporall advantages, with fear and shame, and with reverence of friends and secular respects, with reputation and coercion of humane laws, and at first men snatch at the lesser and lower ends of vertue, and such rewards are visible, and which God sometimes gives in hand to entertain our weak, and imperfect desires. The young Philosophers were very forward to get the precepts of their sect, and the rules of severity, that they might discourse with Kings, not that they might reform their own manners; and some men study to get the ears and tongues of the people, rather then to gain their souls to God: and they obey good laws, for fear of punishment, or to preserve their own peace; and some are worse, they do good deeds out of spite, and *preach Christ out of envie*, or to lessen the authority and fame of others: some of these lessen the excellency of the act, others spoil it quite: it is in some, imperfect; in others, criminal; in some it is consistant with a beginning infant-grace, in others it is an argument of the state of sin and death: but in all cases, the well-grown Christian, he that improves or goes forward in his way to heaven, brings vertue forth, not into discourses and panegyricks, but into his life and manners; his vertue although it serves many good ends accidentally, yet by his intention it onely suppresses his inordinate passions, makes him temperate and chaste, casts out his devils of drunkenness and lust, pride and rage, malice and revenge; it makes him useful to his brother and a servant of GOD; and although these flowers cannot chuse but please his eye, and delight his smell, yet he chuses to gather honey, and licks up the dew of heaven, and feasts his spirit upon the Manna, and dwells not in the collateral usages, and accidental sweetnesses which dwell at the gates of the other senses, but like a Bee loads his thighs with wax

SERMON
XV.

wax and his bag with honey; that is, with the usefull parts of vertue in order to holinesse and felicity. Of which the best signes and notices we can take will be; If we earnestly pursue vertues which are acted in private, as those whose scene lies in publike; if we pray in private, under the onely eye of God and his ministring Angels, as in Churches; if we give our almes in secret rather then in publike; if we take more pleasure in the just satisfaction of our consciences, and securing our reputation; if wee rather pursue innocence then seek an excuse; if wee desire to please God, though wee lose our fame with men; if wee be just to the poorest servant as to the greatest Prince, if we chuse to be among the jewels of God, though we be the *sears of the world*, the off-scouring of the world; if when we are secure from witnesses, and accusers, and not obnoxious to the notices of the law, we think our selves obliged by conscience, and practise, and live accordingly; then our services and intentions in vertue are right, then we are past the twilights of conversion, and the umbrages of the World, and walk in the light of God, of his word, and of his Spirit, of grace, and reason. as becometh *not babes*, but *men in Christ Jesus*. In this progresse of grace I have not yet expressed, that perfect persons should serve GOD out of mere love of God and the Divine excellencies, without the considerations of either heaven or hell; such a thing as that is talked of in mysticall Theologie. And I doubt not but many good persons come to that growth of Charity, that the goodnesse and excellency of God are more incumbent and actually pressing upon their spirit then any considerations of reward: But then I shall adde this; that when persons come to that height of grace (or contemplation rather) and they love God for himself, and do their duties in order to the fruition of him and his pleasure; *all that*, is but heaven in another sence, and under another name; just as the mysticall Theology is the highest duty, and the choicest parts of obedience under a new method: but in order to the present, that which I call a signification of our growth in grace, is a pursuance of vertue upon such reasons as are propounded to us, as motives in Christianity (such as are to glorifie God, and to enjoy his promises in the way, and in our countrey, to avoid the displeasure of God, and to be united to his glories) and then to exercise vertue in such parts and to such purposes as are usefull to good life, and profitable to our neighbours; not to such onely where they serve reputation, or secular ends. For though the great Physitian of our souls hath mingled profits and pleasures with vertue to make its chalice sweet and apt to bee drank off, yet hee that takes out the sweet ingredient, and feasts his palate with the lesse wholesome part, because it is delicious, serves a low end of sense or interest, but serves not GOD at all; and as little does benefit to the soul: such a person is like Homers bird, deplumes himself to feather all the naked callows that

A that he sees, and holds a taper that may light others to heaven, while he burns his own fingers: but a well-grown person, out of habit and choice, out of love of vertue and just intention goes on his journey in straight wayes to heaven, even when the bridle and coercion of laws, or the spurs of interest or reputation are laid aside, and desires witnesses of his actions, not that he may advance his fame, but for reverence and fear, and to make it still more necessary to do holy things.

B 8. Some men there are in the beginning of their holy walking with God, and while they are babes in Christ, who are presently busied in delights of prayers, and rejoyce in publick communion, and count all solemn assemblies, festival; but as they are pleased with them, so they can easily be without them; It is a signe of a common and vulgar love onely to be pleased with the company of a friend, and to be as well without him, *amoris at morsum qui verè senserit*, he that ha's felt the stings of a sharp and very dear affection is impatient in the absence of his beloved object, the soul that is sick and swallowed up with holy fire loves nothing else; all pleasures else seem unfavoury, company is troublesome, visitors are tedious, homilies of comfort are flat and uselesse. The pleasures of vertue to a good and perfect man are not like the perfumes of Nard Pistick, which is very delightfull when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble; we are well enough without it; but vertue is like *hunger and thirst*, it must be satisfied or we die; and when we feel great longings after religion, and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the word and sacraments is more intolerable, and we think our selves really most miserable, when the Church doors are shut against us, or like the Christians in the persecution of the Vandals, who thought it worse then death, that their Bishops were taken from them; If we understand excommunication, or Church-censures (abating the disreputation and secular appendages) in the sense of the spirit to be a misery next to hell it self, then we have made a good progresse in the Charity and grace of God; till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or imperfect, in the same degree in which our affections are cold, and our desires remisse; For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats, and an houre of fervour is more pleasing to God then a moneth of luke-warmnesse, and indifferency.

E 9. But as some are active onely in the presence of a good object, but remisse and carelesse for the want of it, so on the other side, an infant grace is safe in the absence of a temptation, but falls easily, when it is in presence: He therefore that would understand if he be grown in grace, may consider if his safety consists onely in *peace*, or in *the strength of the spirit*. It is good that we will not seek out
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SER. XV.

opportunities to sin; but are not we too apprehensive of it, when it is presented? or do we not sink under when it presses us? can we hold our tapers neer the flames and not suck it in greedily like *Naphtha* or prepared *Nitre*? or can we like the children of the captivity walk in the midst of flames and not be scorched or consumed? Many men will not (like Judah) go into high wayes and untie the girdles of harlots; But can you reject the importunity of a beauteous and an imperious Lady, as Joseph did we had need pray that we be *not lead into temptation*; that is, not onely into the possession, but not into the allurements and neighbour-hood of it, lest by little and little our strongest resolutions be untwist, and crack in sunder like an easie cord severed into single threds: but if we by the necessity of our lives, and manner of living, dwell where a temptation will assault us, then to resist, is the signe of a great grace; but such a signe, that without it, the grace turns into wantonnesse, and the man into a beast, and an Angel into a Devil. R. Moses will not allow a man to be a true penitent untill he hath left all his sin, and in all the like circumstances refuses those temptations under which formerly he sinned and died: and indeed it may happen that such a tryall onely can secure our judgement concerning our selves: and although to be tried in all the same accidents be not safe, nor allwayes contingent, and in such cases it is sufficient to resist all the temptations we have, and avoid the rest and decree against all, yet if it please God we are tempted, as David was by his eyes, or the Martyrs by tortures, or Joseph by his wanton Mistris, then to stand sure and to ride upon the temptation like a ship upon a wave, or to stand like a rock in an impetuous storm, thats the signe of a great grace and of a well-grown Christian.

10. No man is grown in grace but he that is ready for every work, that chooseth not his empyoment, that refuses no imposition from God or his superiour; a ready hand, an obedient heart, and a willing cheerful soul in all the work of God and in every office of religion is a great *index* of a good proficient in the wayes of Godlinesse. The heart of a man is like a wounded hand or arme, which if it be so cured that it can onely move one way, and cannot turn to all postures and natural uses, it is but imperfect, and still half in health, and half wounded: so is our spirit; if it be apt for prayer and close-fisted in almes, if it be sound in faith and dead in charity, if it be religious to God and unjust to our neighbour, there wants some integraal part, or there is a lamenesse; and the deficiency in any one duty implyes the guilt of all (said Saint James) and *bonum ex integrâ causâ, malum ex qualibet particulari*, every fault spoils a grace. But one grace alone cannot make a good man. But as to be universal in our obedience is necessary to the being in the state of grace: so readily to change imployment from the

A the better to the worse, from the honorable to the poor; from usefulness to seemingly unprofitable, is a good Character of a well-grown Christian; if he takes the worst part with indifferency and a spirit equally choosing all the events of the divine providence. Can you be content to descend from ruling of a province to the keeping of a herd: from the work of an Apostle to be confined into a prison; from disputing before Princes to a conversation with Shepherds? can you be willing to all that God is willing, and suffer all that he chooseth as willingly as if you had chosen your own fortune? In the same degree, in which you can conform to God, in the same you have approached towards that perfection whither we must by degrees arrive in our journey towards heaven.

B This is not to be expected of *beginners*; for they must be enticed with apt employments; and it may be, their office and work so fits their spirits, that it makes them first in love with it; and then with God for giving it; and many a man goes to heaven in the dayes of peace, whole faith, and hopes, and patience would have been dashed in pieces, if he had fallen into a storm or persecution. *Oppression will make a wise man mad* (saith Solomon): there are some usages that will put a sober person out of all patience, such
C which are besides the customes of this life, and contrary to all his hopes, and unworthy of a person of his quality: and when *Nero* durst not die, yet when his servants told him that the Senators had condemned him to be put to death *more Majorum*, that is, by scourging like a slave, he was forced into a preternatural confidence, and fell upon his own sword; but when God so changes thy estate that thou art fallen into accidents to which thou art no otherwise disposed, but by grace and a holy spirit, and yet thou canst passe through them with quiernesse, and do the work of suffering as well as the works of prosperous employment; this is an argument of a great grace and an extraordinary spirit. For many persons in a
D change of fortune perish, who if they had still been prosperous had gone to prison; being tempted in a persecution to perjuries and Apostacy and unhandson compliances, and hypocrisy, and irreligion: and many men are brought to vertue, and to God, and to felicity, by being persecuted and made unprosperous: and these are effects of a more absolute and irrelative predestination; but when the grace of God is great and prudent, and masculine, and well-grown, it is unalter'd in all changes, save onely that
E every accident that is new and violent brings him nearer to God, and makes him with greater caution and severity to dwell in vertue;

II. Lastly, some there are who are firme in all great and fore-
teeh changes, and have laid up in the store-houses of the spirit (*reason and religion*) arguments and discourses enough to defend
-170033 them

SER. XV.

them against all violencies and stand at watch so much, that they are safe where they can consider, and deliberate; but there may be something wanting yet; and in the direct line, in the strait progresse to heaven, I call that an infallible signe of a great grace, and indeed the greatest degree of a great grace, when a man is prepared against sudden invasions of the spirit, surreptions and extemporary assaults: Many a valiant person dares fight a battel, who yet will be timorous and surpris'd in a mid-night alarme; or if he falls into a river; And how many discreet persons are there, who, if you offer them a sin, and give them time to consider, and tell them of it before hand, will rather die then be perjured, or tell a deliberate lie, or break a promise; who (it may be) tell many sudden lies, and excuse themselves, and break their promises, and yet think themselves safe enough; and sleep without either affrightments, or any apprehension of dishonour done to their persons or their religion. Every man is not armed for all sudden arrests of passions: few men have cast such fetters upon their lusts and have their passions in so strict confinement, that they may not be over-run with a midnight flood, or an unlooked for inundation; He that does not start when he is smitten suddenly, is a constant person: and that is it which I intend in this instance; that he is a perfect man and well grown in grace, who hath so habitual a resolution, and so unhasty and wary a spirit, as that he decrees upon no act before he hath considered maturely, and changed the sudden occasion into a sober counsel. David by chance spied Bathsheba washing her self, and being surpris'd, gave his heart away before he could consider, and when it was once gone, it was hard to recover it; and sometimes a man is betrayed by a sudden opportunity and all things fitted for his sin ready at the door; the act stands in all its dresse, and will not stay for an answer; and inconsideration is the defence and guard of the sin, and makes that his conscience can the more easie swallow it; what shall the man do then? unlesse he be strong by his old strengths, by a great grace, by an habitual vertue, and a sober unmoved spirit, he falls and dies in the death and hath no new strengths; but such as are to be employed for his recovery; none for his present guard; unlesse upon the old stock, and if he be a well-grown Christian.

These are the parts, acts, and offices of our growing in grace, and yet I have sometimes called them signes; but they are signes, as eating and drinking are signes of life, they are *signes* so as also they are *parts of life*; and these are parts of our growth in grace, so that a man can grow in grace to no other purpose but to these or the like improvements.

Concerning which I have a caution or two to interpose. 1. The growth of grace is to be estimated as other moral things are, not accord-

A according to the growth of things naturall: Grace does not grow by observation, and a continuall efflux, and a constant proportion: and a man cannot call himself to the account for the growth of every day, or week, or moneth: but in the greater portions of our life, in which we have had many occasions and instances to exercise and improve our vertues, we may call our selves to account: but it is a snare to our consciences to be examined in the growth of grace in every short revolution of solemn duty, as against every Communion, or great Festival. 2. Growth in grace is not alwayes to be discerned either *in single instances*, or *in single graces*. Not in single instances: for every time we are to exercise a virtue, we are not in the same naturall dispositions, nor do we meet with the same circumstances, and it is not alwayes necessary that the next act should be more earnest and intense then the former: *all single acts* are to be done after the manner of men, and therefore are not alwayes capable of encreasing; and they have their times beyond which they cannot easily swell: and therefore if it be a good act and zealous, it may proceed from a well-grown grace, and yet a younger and weaker person may do some acts as great and as religious as it; But neither do single graces alwayes afford a regular and certain judgement in this affair, for some persons at the first, had rather die then be nuchast, or perjured: and *greater love, then this no man hath, that he lay down his life* for God: he cannot easily grow in the substance of that act: and if other persons, or himself, in procelle of time do it more cheerfully, or with fewer fears, it is not alwayes a signe of a greater grace, but sometimes of greater collaterall assistances, or a better habit of body, or more fortunate circumstances: for he that goes to the block tremblingly for Christ, and yet endures his death certainly, and endures his trembling too, and runs through all his infirmities and the bigger temptations; looks not so well many times in the eyes of men, but suffers more for God, then those confident Martyrs that courted death in the primitive Church; and therefore may be much dearer in the eyes of God: But that which I say in this particular, is that a smallnesse in one, is not an argument of the imperfection of the whole estate: Because God does not alwayes give to every man occasions to exercise, and therefore not *to improve* every grace; and the passive vertues of a Christian are not to be expected to grow so fast in prosperous, as in suffering Christians: but in this case we are to take accounts of our selves by the improvement of those graces which God makes to happen often in our lives; such as are charity and temperance in young men, liberty and religion in aged persons, ingenuity and humility in schollers, justice in merchants and artificers, forgiveness of injuries in great men, and persons tempted by law-suits; for since vertues grow like other moral habits, by use, diligence, and assiduity,

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SER. XV.

there where God hath appointed our work and in our instances, there we must consider concerning our growth in grace, in other things we are but beginners: But it is not likely that God will trie us concerning degrees hereafter, in such things of which in this world he was sparing to give us opportunities.

3. Be carefull to observe that these rules are not all to be understood *negatively*, but *positively*, and *affirmatively*; that is, that a man may conclude that he is grown in grace if he observes these characters in himself, which I have here discoursed of; but he must not conclude *negatively*, that he is not grown in grace, if he cannot observe such signall testimonies; for sometimes God covers the graces of his servants, and hides the beauty of his tabernacle with goats hair, and the skins of beasts, that he may rather suffer them to want present comfort, then the grace of humility; for it is not necessary to preserve the gayeties and their spirituall pleasures; but if their humility fails, (which may easily do under the sunshine of conspicuous and illustrious graces) their vertues and themselves perish in a sad declension. But sometimes men have not skill to make a judgement; and all this discourse seems too artificiall to be tried by, in the hearty purposes of religion. Sometimes they let passe much of their life, even of their better dayes, without observance of particulars; sometimes their cases of conscience are intricate, or allayed with unavoidable infirmities; sometimes they are so uninstructed in the more secret parts of religion, and there are so many illusions and accidental miscarriages, that if we shall conclude negatively in the present Question, we may produce scruples infinite, but understand nothing more of our estate, and do much lesse of our duty.

4. In considering concerning our growth in grace, let us take more care to consider matters that concern justice, and charity, then that concern the vertue of religion; because in this there may be much, in the other there cannot easily be any *illusion*, and cozenage. That is a good religion that beleeves, and trusts, and hopes in God through Jesus Christ, and for his sake does all justice, and all charity, that he can; and our Blessed Lord gives no other description of love to God, but obedience and keeping his commandments: Justice and charity are like the matter, religion is the form of Christianity; but although the form be more noble and the principle of life, yet it is lesse discernable, lesse materiall, and lesse sensible; and we judge concerning the form by the matter, and by materiall accidents, and by actions: and so we must of our religion, that is, of our love to God, and of the efficacy of our prayers, and the usefulness of our fastings: we must make our judgements by the more materiall parts of our duty, that is, by sobriety, and by justice, and by charity.

I am much prevented in my intention for the perfecting of this

A this so very materiall consideration: I shall therefore onely tell you, that to these parts and actions of good life, or of our growth in grace, some have added some accidentall considerations, which are rather signes then parts of it: Such are. 1. To praise all good things, and to study to imitate what wee praise. 2. To be impatient that any man should excell us; not out of envie to the person, but of noble emulation to the excellencie; For so Themistocles could not sleep after the great victory at Marathon purchased by Miltiades, till he had made himself illustrious by equall services to his Countrey. 3. The bearing of sicknesse patiently, and ever with improvement, and the addition of some excellent principle, and the firm pursuing it. 4. Great devotion, and much delight in our prayers. 5. Frequent inspirations, and often whispers of the Spirit of God prompting us to devotion, and obedience, especially if we adde to this, a constant and ready obedience to all those holy invitations. 6. Offering peace to them that have injured me, and the abating of the circumstances of honour, or of right, when either justice, or charity, is concerned in it. 7. Love to the brethren. 8. To behold our companions, or our inferiours full of honour and fortune; and if we sit still at home and murmur not, or if we can rejoyce both in their honour, and our own quiet, that's a fair work of a good man; And now 9. After all this, I will not trouble you with reckoning a freedom from being tempted, not onely from being overcome, but from being tried: for though that be a rare felicity, and hath in it much safety, yet it hath lesse honour and fewer instances of vertue, unlesse it proceed from a confirmed and heroicall grace; which is indeed a little image of heaven, and of a celestiall charity; and never happens signally to any, but to old and very eminent persons. 10. But some also adde an excellent habit of body and materiall passions. such as are chaste and vertuous dreams, and suppose that as a disease abuses the fancy, and a vice does prejudice it; so may an excellent vertue of the soul smooth and Calcine the body, and make it serve perfectly, and without rebellious indispositions. 11. Others are in love with Mary Magdalens tears, and fancy the hard knees of Saint James, and the sore eyes of Saint Peter, and the very recreations of Saint John. *Proh! quam virtute preditos omnia decet!* thinking all things become a good man; even his gestures and little incuriosities: And though this may proceed from a great love of vertue, yet because some men do thus much and no more, and this is to be attributed to the lustre of vertue, which shines a little thorow a mans eye-lids, though he perversely winks against the light; yet as the former of these two is too Metaphysicall; so is the later too Phantasticall: he that by the fore-going materiall parts and proper significations of a growing grace does

SER. XV.

not understand his own condition, must bee content to work on still *super totam materiam*, without considerations of particulars; he must pray earnestly, and watch diligently, and consult with prudent Guides, and ask of God great measures of his Spirit, and *hunger and thirst after righteousness*: for hee that does so, shall certainly *bee satisfied*: and if he understands not his present good condition, yet if he be not wanting in the down-right endeavours of piety, and in hearty purposes, hee shall then finde that hee is grown in grace, when he springs up in the resurrection of the just, and shall be ingrafted upon a tree of Paradise, which beareth fruit for ever, *Glory to God*, rejoycing to Saints and Angels, and eternal felicity to his own pious, though undiscerning soul.

*Prima sequentem, honestum est in secundis
aut tertijs consistere. Cicero,*



Ser-



Sermon. XVI.

Of Growth in Sinne,

OR

The severall states and degrees of Sinners,

WITH

The manner how they are to be treated.

Jude Epist. Ver. 22, 23.

*And of some have compassion, making a difference: * And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.*



An hath but one entrance into the world, but a thousand wayes to passe from thence; and as it is in the naturall, so it is in the spirituall; nothing but the union of faith and obedience can secure our regeneration, and our new birth, and can bring us to see the light of heaven: but there are a thousand passages of turning into darknesse; and it is not enough that our bodies are exposed to so many sad infirmities and dishonourable imperfections, unlesse our soul also be a subject capable of so many diseases, follies, irregular passions, false principles, accursed

SERMON
XVI.

habits and degrees of perversnesse, that the very kindes of them A
 are reducible to a method, and make up the part of a science: There are variety of stages and descents to death; as there are diversity of torments, and of sad regions of misery in hell, which is the centre and kingdom of sorrows. But that wee may a little refresh the sadnesse of this consideration; for every one of these stages of sin, God hath measured out a proportion of mercy; for if sin abounds, grace shall much more abound, and God hath concluded all under sin, not with purposes to destroy us, but, *Ut omnium misereatur, that he might have mercy upon all*; that light may break forth from the deepest inclosures of darknesse, and B
 mercy may rejoyce upon the recessions of justice, and grace may triumph upon the ruines of sin, and God may be glorified in the miracles of our conversion, and the wonders of our preservation, and glories of our being saved. There is no state of sin, but if we be persons capable (according to Gods method of healing) of receiving antidotes, we shall finde a sheet of mercy spread over our wounds and nakednesse. If our diseases be small, almost necessary, scarce avoidable, then God does, and so we are commanded to cure them, and cover them with a vail of pity, compassion, and gentle remedies: If our evils be violent, inveterate, gangrened, C
 and incorporated into our nature by evil customes, they must bee pulled from the flames of hell with censures, and cauteries, and punishments, and sharp remedies, quickly and rudely; their danger is present and sudden, its effect is quick and intolerable, and there is no soft counsels then to be entertained; they are already in the fire; but they may be saved for all that; so great, so infinite, so miraculous is Gods mercy, that he will not give a sinner over, though the hairs of his head be singed with the flames of hell: Gods desires of having us to be saved continue, even when we begin to be damned; even till we will not be saved, and are gone beyond Gods method, and all the revelations of his kindnesse. And D
 certainly that is a bold and a mighty sinner whose iniquity is sweld beyond all the bulk and heap of Gods revealed loving kindnesse: If sin hath sweld beyond grace, and superabounds over it, that sin is gone beyond the measures of a man; such a person is removed beyond all the malice of humane nature, into the evil and spite of Devils, and accursed spirits; there is no greater sadnesse in the world then this. God hath not appointed a remedy in the vast treasures of grace for some men, and some sins; they have sinned like the falling Angels; and having over-run the ordinary evil inclinations of their nature, they are without the protection of the Divine mercy; and the conditions of that grace which was designed to save all the world, and was sufficient to have saved twenty. This is a condition to be avoyded with the care of GOD and his Angels, and all the whole industry of man. In order to which E

A which end my purpose now is to remonstrate to you the severall states of sin, and death, together with those remedies which God had proportioned out to them, that we may observe the evils of the least, and so avoid the intolerable mischiefs of the greater, even of those sins which still are within the power and possibilities of recovery, lest insensibly we fall into those sins and into those circumstances of person for which Christ never died, which the Holy Ghost never means to cure, and which the eternal God never will pardon; for there are of this kinde, more then commonly men imagine, whilest they amuse their spirits with gaities and false principles, till they have run into horrible impieties, from whence they are not willing to withdraw their foot, and God is resolved never to snatch and force them thence.

B 1. [of some have compassion] and these I shall reduce to four heads or orders of men and actions; all which have their proper cure proportionable to their proper state, gentle remedies to the lesser irregularities of the soul. The first are those that sin without observation of their particular state; either because they are uninstructed in the speciall cases of conscience, or because they do an evil against which there is no expresse commandment. It is a sad calamity, that there are so many millions of men and women that are entred into a state of sicknesse and danger, and yet are made to beleve they are in perfect health; and they do actions concerning which they never made a question whether they were just or no; nor were ever taught by what names to call them. For while they observe that *modesty* is sometimes abused by a false name, and called *clownishnesse*, and *want of breeding*; and *contentednesse* and *temperate living* is suspected to be *want of courage* and *noble thoughts*; and *severity of life* is called *imprudent* and *unsociable*; and *simplicity* and *heartty honesty* is counted *foolish* and *unpolitike*, they are easily tempted to honour *prodigality* and *foolish dissolution* of their estates with the title of *liberall* and *noble usages*; *timorousnesse* is called *caution*; *rashnesse* is called *quicknesse of spirit*; *covetousnesse*, is *frugality*; *amorousnesse* is *society* and *gentile*; *peevishnesse* and *anger* is *courage*; *flattery* is *humane* and *courteous*; and under these false vails vertue slips away (like truth from under the hand of them that fight for her) and leave vices dressed up with the same imagery, and the fraud not discovered, till the day of recompences, when men are distinguished by their rewards. But so men think they sleep freely when their spirits are loaden with a Lethargie, and they call a Hectick-feaver the vigour of a naturall heat, till nature changes those lesse discerned states into the notorious images of death. Very many men never consider whether they sin or no in 10000. of their actions, every one of which is very disputable; and do not think they are bound to consider: these men are to be pitied and instructed, they are to be called upon to use religion like a daily diet;

SERMON
XVI.

diet; their consciences must bee made tender, and their Catechisme enlarged; teach them, and make them sensible and they are cured. A

But the other in this place are more considerable: Men sin without observation, because their actions have no restraint of an expresse Commandment, no letter of the law to condemn them by an expresse sentence. And this happens, when the crime is comprehended under a generall notion without the instancing of particulars; for if you search over all the Scripture you shall never finde *incest named* and marked with the black character of death; and there are divers sorts of uncleannesse, to which Scripture therefore gives no name, because she would have them have no being; And it had been necessary that God should have described all particulars, and all kindes, if hee had not given reason to man. For so it is fit that a guide should point out every turning, if he be to teach a child, or a fool to return under his fathers roof: But he that bids us avoid intemperance for fear of a feaver, supposes you to be sufficiently instructed that you may avoid the plague; and when to look upon a woman with lust is condemned, it will not be necessary to adde, you must not do more, when even the least is forbidden: and when to uncover the nakednesse of Noah brought an universall plague upon the posterity of Cham, it was not necessary, that the Law-giver should say, you must not ascend to your fathers bed, or draw the currains from your sisters retirements. When the Athenians forbade to transport figs from Athens, there was no need to name the gardens of Alcibiades, much lesse was it necessary to adde, that Chabrias should send no plants to Sparta: Whatsoever is comprised under the generall notion, and partakes of the common nature, and the same iniquity, needs no speciall prohibition, unlesse we think we can mock God and elude his holy precepts with an absurd trick of mistaken Logick. I am sure that will not save us harmlesse from a thunderbolt. B
C
D

2. Men sin without an expresse prohibition, when they commit a thing that is *like* a forbidden evil. And when Saint Paul had reckoned many works of the flesh, he addes [*and such like*] all that have the same unreasonablenesse and carnality. For thus, Polygamy is unlawfull, for if it be not lawfull for a Christian to put away his wife and marry another (unlesse for adultery) much lesse may he keep a first and take a second, when the first is not put away; If a Christian may not be drunk with wine, neither may he be drunk with passion; if he may not kill his neighbour, neither then must he tempt him to sinne; for that destroyes him more: if he may not wound him, then he may not perswade him to intemperance, and a drunken feaver; if it be not lawfull to cozen a man, much lesse is it permitted that hee make a man a fool, and a beast, and exposed to every mans abuse, and to all ready evils. And yet men are taught E

A taught to start at the one half of these, and make no conscience of the other half; whereof some have a greater baseness then the other that are named, and all have the same unreasonable-
ness.

B 3. A man is guilty, even when no law names his action, if he does any thing that is a cause, or an effect, a part or unhandsome adjunct of a forbidden instance; he that forbid all intemperance, is as much displeased with the infinite of foolish talk that happens at such meetings, as he is at the spoiling of the drink, and the destroying the health. If God cannot endure wantonness, how can he suffer lascivious dressings, tempting circumstances, wanton eyes, high diet? If idleness be a sin, then all immoderate mispending of our time, all long and tedious games, all absurd contrivances how to throw away a precious hour, and a *day of salvation* also, are against God, and against Religion. He that is commanded to be charitable, it is also intended he should not spend his money vainly, but be a good husband, and provident, that he may be able to give to the poor, as he would be to purchase a Lordship, or pay his Daughters portion: and upon this stock it is that Christian religion forbids jeering, and immoderate laughter, and reckons *jestings* amongst the *things that are unseemly*. This also would be considered.

C 4. Besides the expresse laws of our Religion, there is an universal line and limit to our passions and designs, which is called *the analogie of Christianity*; that is, the proportion of its sanctity and strictness of his holy precepts. This is not forbidden, but does this become you? Is it decent to see a Christian live in plenty and ease, and heap up money, and never to partake of Christs passions: there is no law against a Judge, his being a dresser of gardens, or a gatherer of Sycamore fruits, but it becomes him not, and deserves a reproof. If I do exact justice to my neighbour, and cause him to be punished legally for all the evils hee makes mee suffer, I have not broken a fragment from the stony Tables of the Law: but this is against the *analogie of our religion*; It does not become a Disciple of so gentle a Master to take all advantages that he can. Christ, that quitted all the glories that were essentiall to him, and that grew up in his nature when he lodged in his Fathers bosome, Christ that suffered all the evils due for the sins of mankind, himself remaining most innocent. Christ, that promised persecution, injuries, and affronts as part of our present portion, and gave them to his Disciples as a legacy, and gave us his Spirit to enable us to suffer injuries; and made that the parts of suffering evils should be the matter of three or four Christian graces, of *patience*, of *fortitude*, of *longanimity*, and *perseverance*; he that of eight beatitudes made that five of them should be instanced in the matter of humiliation and suffering temporall inconvenience, *that blessed Master* was certainly desirous that his Disciples should take their crowns from the crosse,

not

SERMON
XVI.

not from the evenness and felicities of the world; Hee intended we should give something, and suffer more things, and forgive all things, all injuries whatsoever; and though together with this may consist our securing a just interest; yet in very many circumstances we shall be put to consider how farre it becomes us to quit something of that, to pursue peace; and when we have secured the letter of the Law, that we also look to its analogy; when we do what we are strictly bound to, then also we must consider what becomes us, who are Disciples of such a Master, who are instructed with such principles, charmed with so severe precepts, and invited with the certainty of infinite rewards. Now although this discourse may seem new and strange, and very severe, yet it is infinitely reasonable, because Christianity is a law of love, and voluntary services; it can in no sence be confined with laws and strict measures; well may the Ocean receive its limits, and the whole capacity of fire bee glutted, and the grave have his belly so full, that it shall cast up all its bowels, and disgorge the continuall meal of so many thousand yeers; but love can never have a limit; and it is indeed to be *swallowed up*, but nothing can *fill* it but God, who hath no bound. Christianity is a law for sons, not for servants, and God that gives his grace without measure, and rewards without end, and acts of favour beyond our askings, and provides for us beyond our needs, and gives us counsels beyond commandments, intends not to be limited out by the just evennesses, and stricken measures of the words of a commandment. Give to God *full measure, shaken together, pressed down, heaped up, and running over*; for God does so to us; and when we have done so to him, we are infinitely short of the least measure of what God does for us; *we are still unprofitable servants*. And therefore as the breaking any of the laws of Christianity provokes God to anger, so the prevaricating in the *analogue* of Christianity stirres him up to jealousy: He hath reason to suspect our hearts are not right with him, when wee are so reserved in the matter and measures of our services: and if we will give God but just what he calls for by expresse mandate, it is just in him to require all of that at our hands without any abatement, and then we are sure to miscarry. And let us remember that when God said, he was *a jealous God*, he expressed the meaning of it to be, he did punish to *the third and fourth generation*. Jealousie is like the rage of a man: but if it be also like the anger of God, it is insupportable, and will crush us into the ruins of our grave.

But because these things are not frequently considered, there are very many sinnes committed against religion, which because the commandment hath not marked, men refuse to mark, and think God requires no more. I am entred into a sea of matter, which I must not now prosecute; but I shall onely note this to you, that it is but

A but reasonable, we should take accounts of our lives, by the proportions as well as by the expresse rules, of our religion; because in humane and civil actions all the nations of the world use so to call their subjects to account. For that which in the accounts of men is called reputation and publike honesty, is the same which in religion we call analogy and proportion; in both cases there being some things, which are besides the notices of laws, and yet are the most certain consignations of an excellent vertue. He is a base person that does any thing against publick honesty, and yet no man can be punished if he marries a wife the next day after his first wifes funeral: and so he
 B that prevaricates the proportions and excellent reasons of Christianity, is a person without zeal, and without love: and unless care be taken of him, he will quickly be without religion. But yet these I say are a sort of persons which are to be used with gentleness, and treated with compassion; for no man must be handled roughly to force him to do a kindenesse: and coercion of laws and severity of judges, serjeants and executioners are against offenders of commandments; but the way to cure such persons is the easiest and gentlest remedy of all others. They are to be instructed in all the parts of duty, and invited forward by the consideration of the great rewards which are laid up for all the sons of God, who serve him without
 C constraint, without measures and allayes, even as fire burns, and as the roses grow, even as much as they can, and to all the extent of their natural and artificial capacities. For it is a thing fit for our compassion, to see men fettered in the iron bands of laws, and yet to break the golden chains of love, but all those instruments which are proper to enkindle the love of God, and to turn fear into charity, are the proper instances of that compassion which is to be used towards these men.

2. The next sort of those who are in the state of sin, and yet to be handled gently and with compassion, are those who entertain themselves with the beginnings and little entrances of sin, which as
 D they are to be more pittied, because they often come by reason of inadvertency, and an unavoidable weaknesse in many degrees, so they are more to be taken care of, because they are undervalued and undiscernably run into inconvenience; when we see a childe strike a servant rudely, or jeere a silly person, or wittily cheat his play-fellow, or talk words light as the skirt of a summer garment, we laugh and are delighted with the wit and confidence of the boy; and encourage such hopefull beginnings; and in the mean time
 E we consider not that from these beginnings he shall grow up till he become a Tyrant, an oppressor, a Goat and a Traytour. *Nam simul malus fit & malus esse cernitur; sicut nec scorpis tum in nascentur stimuli cum pungunt;* No man is discerned to be vicious so soon as he is so, and vices have their infancy and their childe-hood, and it cannot be expected that in a childs age should be the vice
 of

SER. XVI.

of a man; that were monstrous as if he wore a beard in his cradle; and we do not believe that a serpents sting does just then grow when he strikes us in a vital part: The venome and the little spear was there, when it first began to creep from his little shiel: And little boldnesses and looser words and wranglings for nuts, and lying for trifles are of the same proportion to the malice of a childe, as impudence and duels and injurious law-suits, and false witness in judgement, and perjuries are in men. And the case is the same, when men enter upon a new stock of any sin; the vice is at first apt to be put out of countenance, and a little thing discourages it; and it amuses the spirit with words, and phantastick images, and cheap instances of sin; and men think themselves safe because they are as yet safe from laws, and the sin does not as yet out-cry the healthful noise of Christs loud cryings and intercession with his Father, nor call for thunder or an amazing judgement; but according to the old saying *the thornes of Dauphine will never fetch blood if they do not scratch the first day*; and we shall finde that the little undecencies and risings of our souls, the first openings and dispartings of our vertue differ onely from the state of perdition, as infancy does from old age, as sicknesse from death; It is the entrance into those regions whither whosoever passes finally, shall lie down and groan with an eternal sorrow. Now in this case it may happen that a compassion may ruine a man, if it be the pity of an indiscreet mother, and nurse the sin from its weaknesse to the strength of habit and impudence; The compassion that is to be used to such persons is the compassion of a Physitian or a severe Tutor; chastise thy infantinne by discipline, and acts of vertue; and never begin that way from whence you must return with some trouble, and much shame, or else if you proceed, you finish your eternal ruine.

He that means to be temperate and avoid the crime and dishonour of being a drunkard must not love to partake of the songs, or to bear a part in the foolish scenes of laughter, which distract wisdom and fright her from the company; And Lavina that was chaster then the elder Sabines, and severer then her Philosophical guardian, was wel instructed in the great lines of honour and cold justice to her husband; but when she gave way to the wanton ointments and looser circumstances of the *Baie* and bathed often in *Avernus*, and from thence hurried to the companies and dressings of *Lucrinus*, she quenched her honour, and gave her vertue and her body as a spoil to the follies and intemperance of a young gentle-man. For so have I seen the little purles of a spring sweat thorow the bottom of a bank and intenerate the stubborn pavement, till it hath made it fit for the impression of a childs foot, and it was despised like the descending pearls of a misty morning, till it had opened its way, and made a stream large enough to carry away the ruines of the

A the undermined strand, and to invade the neighbouring gardens: but then the despised drops were grown into an artificial river and an intolerable mischief: so are the first entrances of sin, stop'd with the antidotes of a hearty prayer, and checked into sobriety, by the eye of a reverend man, or the counsels of a single sermon: But when such beginnings are neglected, and our religion hath not in it so much Philosophy as to think any thing evil as long as we can endure it, they grow up to ulcers and pestilential evils; they destroy the soul by their abode, who at their first entry might have been killed with the pressure of a little finger.

B Ἀρχὴν ἰδὼς πάλυ λελόν ἡς τὰ λελόν.

Those men are in a condition in which they may if they please pity themselves; keep their green wounds from festering and uncleanness and it will heal alone, *non procul absint*, they are not far from the kingdom of Heaven, but they are not within its portion; and let me say this, that although little sins have not yet made our condition desperate but left it easily recoverable, yet it is a condition that is quite out of Gods favour: although they are not far advanced in their progresse to ruine, yet they are not at all in the state of grace, and therefore though they are to be pitied and relieved accordingly, yet that supposes the incumbency of a present misery.

C 3. There are some very much to be pitied and assisted because they are going to hell, and (as matters stand with them) they cannot, or they think they cannot avoid it. *Quidam ad alienum dormiunt somnium, ad alienum edunt appetitum: amare & odisse (res omnium maxime liberos) jubentur.* There are some persons whose life is so wholly in dependance from others, that they sleep when others please; they eat and drink according to their Masters appetite, or intemperance: they are commanded to love or hate, and are not left free in the very Charter and priviledges of nature: *Miserum est servire sub Domini patris felicitibus*, for suppose the Prince or the Patron be vicious, suppose he calls his servants to bathe their souls in the goblets of intemperance: if he be also imperious (for such persons love not to be contradicted in their vices) it is the losse of that mans fortune, not to lose his soul: and it is the servants excuse, and he esteems it also his glory, that he can tell a merry tale, how his Master and himself did swim in drink, till they both talked like fools, and then did lie down like beasts.

Sences.

D — *Pacinus quos inquinat aequat.* There is then no difference, but that the one is the fairest bull and the Master of the herd. And how many Tenents and relatives are known to have a servile conscience, and to know no affirmation or negation but such as shall serve their Land-lords interest? Alas the poor men live by it, and they must beg their bread if ever they turn recreant, or shall offer to be honest. There are some trades whose very foundation

SERMON
XVI.

is laid in the vice of others; and in many others if a threed of deceit do not quite run thorow all their negotiations, they decay into the sorrows of beggery; and therefore they will support their neighbours vice, that he may support their trade: And what would you advise those men to do, to whom a false oath is offered to their lips, and a dagger at their heart: their reason is surprized, and their choice is seized upon, and all their consultation is arrested; and if they did not prepare before hand, and stand armed with religion, and perfect resolutions, would not any man fall, and think that every good man will say his case is pitiable. Although no temptation is bigger then the grace of God, yet many temptations are greater then our strengths, and we do not live at the rate of a mighty and a victorious grace.

Those persons which cause these vicious necessities upon their brethren will lie low in hell; but the others will have but small comfort in feeling a lesser damnation.

Of the same consideration it is, when ignorant people are Catechized into false doctrine, and know nothing but such principles which weaken the nerves, and enfeeble the joynts of holy living; they never heard of any other; those that follow great and evil examples; the people that are ingaged in the publike sins of a kingdom which they understand not, and either must venture to be undone upon the strength of their own little reasonings, and weak discouragements, or else must go *quâ itur, non quâ eundum est*, there where the popular misery hath made the way plain before their eyes, though it be uneven and dangerous to their consciences. In these cases I am forced to reckon a Catalogue of mischiefs; but it will be hard to cure any of them. Aristippus in his discourses was a great flatterer of Dionysius of Sicily, and did own doctrines which might give an easiness to some vices, and knew not how to contradict the pleasures of his Prince; but seemed like a person disposed to partake of them, that the example of a Philosopher, and the practise of a King might do countenance to a shamefull life. But when Dionysius sent him two women slaves, fair, and young, he sent them back, and shamed the easiness of his doctrine by the severity of his manners, he daring to be virtuous when he was alone, though in the presence of him, whom he thought it necessary to flatter, he had no boldness to own the virtue: So it is with too many; if they be left alone, and that they stand unshaken with the eye of their temper, or the authority of their Lord, they go whither their education or their custome carries them; but it is not in some natures to deny the face of a man, and the boldness of a sinner; and which is yet worse, it is not in most mens interest to do it; these men are in a pitiable condition, and are to be helped by the following rules.

1. Let every man consider that he hath two relations to serve, and

A and he stands between God and his Master, or his nearest relative: and in such cases it comes to be disputed whether interest be preferred; which of the persons is to be displeased, God or my Master, God or my Prince, God or my Friend? If we be servants of the man; remember also that I am a servant of God; adde to this, that if my present service to the man be a slavery in me, and a tyranny in him, yet Gods service is a noble freedom: And Apollonius said well, It was for slaves to lie, and for free-men to speak the truth. *If you be freed by the blood of the Son of God, then you are free indeed:* and then consider how dishonourable it is to lie, to the displeasure of God, and onely to please your fellow servant. The difference here is so great, that it might be sufficient onely to consider the antithesis. Did the man make you what you are? Did he pay his blood for you, to save you from death? Does he keep you from sickness? True. You eat at his table; but they are of Gods provisions that he and you feed of. Can your master free you from a fever, when you have drunk your self into it? and restore your innocence when you have forsworn your self for his interest? Is the change reasonable? He gives you meat and drink for which you do him service. But is not he a Tyrant; and an usurper; an oppressor, and an extortioner, if he will force thee to give thy soul for him? to sell thy soul for old shoes, and broken bread? But when thou art to make thy accounts of eternity, will it be taken for an answer, My Patron, or my Governour, my Prince, or my Master, forced me to it? or if it will not, will he undertake a portion of thy flames? or if that may not be, will it be in the midst of all thy torments, any ease to thy sorrows to remember all the rewards and clothes, all the money, and civilities, all the cheerfull looks, and familiarity, and fellowship of vices which in your life time made your spirit so gay and easie? It will in the eternall loads of sorrow, adde a duplicate of groans and indignation, when it shall be remembered for how base and trifling interest, and upon what weak principles we fell sick and died eternally.

The next advise to persons thus tempted is, that they would learn to separate duty from mistaken interest; and let them be both served in their just proportions, when we have learned to make a difference. A wife is bound to her husband in all his just designes, and in all noble usages and Christian comportments: But a wife is no more bound to pursue her husbands vicious hatreds, then to serve and promote his unlawfull and wandring loves: It is not alwayes a part of duty to think the same propositions, or to curse the same persons, or to wish him successe in unjust designs: And yet the sadnesse of it is, that a good woman is easily tempted to beleave the cause to be just, and when her affection hath forced her judgement, her judgement for ever after shall carry the affection to all its erring and abused determinations. A

SERMON
XVI.

Ecclus. 4. 22.

friend is turned a flatterer if he does not know, that the limits of friendship extend no further then the pale and inclosures of reason and religion. No Master puts it into his covenant that his servant shall be drunk with him, or give in evidence in his Masters cause, according to his Masters scrolls: and therefore it is besides and against the duty of a servant to sin by that authority; it is as if he should set Mules to keep his sheep, or make his Dogs to carry burdens, it is besides their nature and designe; and if any person falls under so tyrannicall relation, let him consider how hard a Master he serves; where the Devil gives the imployment, and shame is his entertainment, and sin is his work, and hell is his wages. Take therefore the counsel of the son of Syrac. *Accept no person against thy soul, and let not the reverence of any man cause thee to fall.*

3. When passion mingles with duty, and is a necessary instrument of serving God, let not that passion run its own course and passe on to liberty, and thence to licence and dissolution: but let no more of it be entertained, then will just do the work. For no zeal of duty will warrant a violent passion to prevaricate a duty. I have seen some officers of Warre in passion and zeal of their duty, have made no scruple to command a souldier with the dialect of cursing and accents of swearing, and pretended they could not else speak words effective enough, and of sufficient authority; and a man may easily be overtaken in the issues of his government; while his authority serves it self with passion, if he be not curious in his measures, his passion also will serve it self upon the authority and over-rule the Ruler.

4. Let every such tempted person remember, that all evil comes from our selves, and not from others; and therefore all pretences and prejudices, all commands and temptations, all opinions and necessities, are but instances of our weaknesse, and arguments of our folly: For unlesse we list, no man can make us drink beyond our measures: And if I tell a lie for my Masters or my friends advantage, it is because I prefer a little end of money, or flattery before my honour and my innocence. They are huge follies which go up and down in the mouths and heads of men. [*He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reigne.*] [He that will not do as his company does, must go out of the world, and quit all society of men: We create necessities of our own, and then think we have reason to serve their importunity. *Non ego sum ambitiosus, sed nemo aliter Roma potest vivere, non ego sumptuosus, sed urbs ipsa magnas impensas exigit. Non est meum vitium quod iracundus sum, quod nondum constitui certum vite genus, adolescentia hec facit.* The place we live in makes us expensive, the state of life I have chosen renders me ambitious, my age makes me angry or lustfull, proud or peevish. These are nothing else but resolutions never to mend as long as we can have excuse for our follies, and untill we can

A can cozen our selves no more. There is no such thing as a necessity
for a Prince to dessemble, or for a servant to lie, or for a friend to
flatter, for a civil person and a sociable, to be drunk: we cozen our
selves with thinking the fault is so much derivative from others, till
the smart and the shame falls upon our selves, and covers our heads
with sorrow. And unlesse this gap be stopped, and that we build our
duty upon our own bottoms, as supported with the grace of God,
there is no vice but may finde a Patron; and no age or relation, or
state of life, but will be an engagement to sin. And we shall think it
necessary to be lustfull in our youth, and revengefull in our man-
hood, and covetous in our old age: and we shall perceive that every
state of men, and every trade and profession, lives upon the vices of
others, or upon their miseries; and therefore they will think it ne-
cessary to promote, or to wish it. If men were temperate, Physiti-
ans would be poor: and unlesse some Princes were ambitious, or
others injurious, there would be no employment for souldiers. The
Vintners retail supports the Merchants trade, and it is a vice that sup-
ports the Vintners retail; and if all men were wise and sober persons,
we should have fewer beggers, and fewer rich; and if our Law-gi-
vers should imitate Demades of Athens, who condemned a man that
lived by selling things belonging to funeralls, as supposing he could
not choose but wish the death of men, by whose dying he got his li-
ving, we should finde most men accounted criminals, because vice
is so involved in the affaires of the world, that it is made the support
of many trades, and the businesse of great multitudes of men. Cer-
tainly from hence it is that isiquity does so much abound; and un-
lesse we state our questions right, and perceive the evil to be design-
ed onely from our selves, and that no such pretence shall keep off the
punishment, or the shame from our selves, we shall fall into a state
which is onely capable of compassion, because it is irrecoverable:
and then we shall be infinitely miserable, when we can onely re-
ceive an uselesse and ineffective pity. Whatsoever is necessary can-
not be avoided: He therefore that shall say, he cannot avoid his sin,
is out of the mercies of this Text: they who are appointed Guides,
and Physitians of souls, cannot to any purpose do their offices of pi-
ty. It is necessary that we serve God, and do our duty, and secure
the interest of our souls, and be as carefull to preserve our relations
to God, as to our friend; or Prince. But, if it can be necessary for any
man, in any condition to sin, it is also necessary for that man to
perish.

Sermon XVII.

The severall states and degrees of Sinners,

WITH

The manner how they are to be treated.

Part II.

4. **T**He last sort of them that sin, and yet are to be treated with compassion, is of them that interrupt the course of an honest life with single acts of sin, stepping aside and *starting like a broken bowe*; whose resolution stands fair, and their hearts are towards God, and they sojourn in religion, or rather, dwell there; but that like evil husbands they go abroad, and enter into places of dishonour and unthriftinesse. Such as these, all stories remembred with a sad character; and every narrative concerning David which would end in honour and fair report, is sullied with the remembrances of *Bathsheba*: and the Holy Ghost hath called him *a man after Gods own heart, save in the matter of Drinke*; there indeed he was a man after his own heart; even then when his reason was stolne from him by passion, and his religion was sullied by the beauties of a fair woman. I wish we lived in an age in which the people were to be treated with, concerning renouncing the single actions of sin, and the seldome interruptions of piety: Men are taught to say, that every mans sins in every action he does; and this is one of the doctrines, for the beleiving of which he shall be accounted a good man; and upon this ground it is easie for men to allow themselves some sins, when in all cases, and in every action it is unavoidable. I shall say nothing of the Question, save that the Scriptures reckon otherwise, * and in the accounts of Davids life reckon but one great sin, * and in Zachary and Elizabeth gave a testimony of an unblameable conversation; * and

SERMON
XVII.

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A and Hezekiah did not make *his confession* when he prayed to God in his sicknesse and said, *he had walked uprightly before God*, * and therefore St. Paul after his conversion designed and laboured hard, and therefore certainly with hopes to accomplish it, that *he might keep his conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man*, * and one of Christs great purposes is to present his whole Church pure and spotlesse to the throne of grace, and * Saint John the Baptist offended none but Herod, * and no pious Christian brought a bill of accusation against the holy Virgin Mother; * certain it is, that God hath given us precepts of such a holinesse and such a purity, such a meeknesse and such humility, as hath no pattern but Christ, no precedent but the purities of God: and therefore it is intended we should live with a life whose actions are not checker'd with white and black, half sin and half vertue: Gods sheep are not like Jacobs flock streaked and spotted: it is an intire holinesse that God requires, and will not endure to have a holy course interrupted by the dishonour of a base and ignoble action. I do not mean that a mans life can be as pure as the Sun, or the rayes of celestial Jerusalem; but like the Moon, in which there are spots, but they are no deformity: a lessening onely and an abatement of light, no cloud to hinder and draw a vail before its face: but

C sometimes it is not so serene and bright as at other times. Every man hath his indiscretions and infirmities, his arrests and sudden incurfions, his neighbourhoods and semblances of sin, his little violences to reason and peevish melancholy, and humorous Phantastick discourses; unaptnesse to a devout prayer, his fondnesses to judge favourably in his own cases, little deceptions, and voluntary and involuntary coufenages, ignorances and inadvertencies, carelesse hours, and unwatchfull seasons, but no good man ever commits one act of adultery; no godly man will at any time be drunk, or if he be, he ceases to be a godly man, and is run into the

D confines of death, and is sick at heart, and may die of the sicknesse, die eternally. This happens more frequently in persons of an infant piety, when the vertue is not corroborated by a long abode and a confirmed resolution, and an usual victory and a triumphant grace, and the longer we are accustomed to piety, the more infrequent will be the little breaches of folly, and a returning sin. But as the needle of a compasse, when it is directed to its beloved star, at the first addresses waves on either side, and seemes indifferent in his courtship of the rising or declining sun, and when it

E seemes first determined to the North, stands a while trembling, as if it suffered inconvenience in the first fruition of its desires, and stands not still in a full enjoyment till after, first, a great variety of motion, and then an undisturbed posture: so is the piety, and so is the conversion of a man; wrought by degrees and several steps of imperfection; and at first our choices are wavering, convinced

SERMON
XVII.

vinced by the grace of God and yet not perswaded, and then perswaded but not resolved, and then resolved but deferring to begin, and then beginning, but (as all beginnings are) in weaknesse and uncertainty, and we flie out often into huge indiscretions, and look back to Sodom and long to return to Egypt; and when the storm is quite over, we finde little bubblings and unevennesses upon the face of the waters, we often weaken our own purposes by the returns of sin, and we do not call our selves *conquerours* till by the long possession of vertues it is a strange and unusuall, and therefore an uneasie and unpleasant thing to act a crime. When Polemon of Athens by chance comming into the schools of Xenocrates was reformed upon the hearing of that one lecture, some wise men gave this censure of him; *peregrinatus est huius animus in nequitia, non habitavit*, his minde wandred in wickednesse, and travelled in it, but never dwelt there; the same is the case of some men; they make inroads into the enemies countrey, not like enemies to spoil, but like Dinah to be satisfied with the stranger beauties of the land, till their vertues are defloured and they enter into tragedies, and are possessed by death and intolerable sorrows; but because this is like the fate of Jacobs daughter and happens not by designe, but folly, not by malice, but surpris, not by the strength of will, but by the weaknesse of grace, and yet carries a man to the same place whither a great vice usually does, it is hugely pitiable, and the persons are to be treated with compassion, and to be assisted by the following considerations and exercises.

First let us consider, that for a good man to be overtaken in a single crime is the greatest dishonour and unthriftinesse in the whole world. *As a fly in a box of ointment, so is a little folly to him who is accounted wise*, said the Son of Sirach: No man chides a fool for his weaknesse, or scorns a childe for playing with flies and preferring the present appetite, before all the possibilities of to morrows event: But men wondered when they saw *Socrates* ride upon a cane; and when Solomon laid his wisdom at the foot of Pharaohs daughter, and changed his glory for the interest of wanton sleep, he became the discourse of heaven and earth: and men think themselves abused, and their expectation coustened when they see a wise man do the actions of a fool, and a good man seized upon by the dishonours of a crime. But the losse of his reputation is the least of his evil. *It is the greatest improvidence in the world to let a healthful constitution be destroyed in the surfet of one night*. For although, when a man by the grace of God and a long endeavour hath obtained the habit of Christian graces, every single sin does not spoil the habit of vertue, because that cannot be lost but as it was gotten, that is, by parts, and succession, yet every crime interrupts the *acceptation* of the grace, and makes the man

to

A to enter into the state of enmity, and displeasure with God. The habit is onely lessened *naturally*, but the *value* of it is wholly taken away: and in this sence is that of Josephus το ὅ ἐν μιᾷ κακίᾳ καὶ ὅλῳ νόμῳ παρανομεῖν ἵνα δίκαιον ᾖ which Saint James well renders. *He that keeps the whole law and offends in one point is guilty of all*; that is; if he prevaricates in any commandement, the transgression of which by the law was capital, shall as certainly die as if he broke the whole law; and the same is the case of those single actions which the school calls deadly sins, that is, actions of choice in any sin that hath a *name*, and makes a *Kinde*, and hath a distinct *matter*. And sins once pardoned return again to all the purposes of mischief. If we by a new sin forfeit Gods former loving kindnesse, *When the righteous man turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be remembered, in the trespassse that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* Now then consider how great a fool he is, who when he hath with much labour and by suffering violence contradicted his first desires; when his spirit hath been in agony and care, and with much uneasinesse hath denied to please the lower man, when with many prayers and groans and innumerable sighs and strong cryings to God with sharp sufferances and a long severity, he hath obtained of God to begin his pardon and restitution, and that he is in some hopes to return to Gods favour, and that he shall become an heire of heaven: when some of his amazing fears and distracting cares begin to be taken off, when he begins to think, that now it is not certain he shall perish in a sad eternity, but he hopes to be saved, and he considers how excellent a condition that is, *he hopes when he dies to go to God*, and that he shall never enter into the possession of Devils; and this state which is but the twilight of a glorious felicity, he hath obtained with great labour and much care, and infinite danger; that this man should throw all this structure down, and *then when* he is ready to reap the fruits of his labours, by one indiscreet action, to set fire upon his corn fields, and destroy all his dearly earned hopes, for the madnesse and loose wandrings of an hour; This man is an indiscreet gamester; who doubles his stake as he thrives, and at one throw is dispossessed of all the prosperities of a luckie hand.

They that are poor (as Plutarch observes) are careless of little things, because by saving them, they think no great moments can accrue to their estates, and they despairing to be rich, think such frugality impertinent: But they that feel their banks swell, and are within the possibilities of wealth, think it usefull if they reserve the smaller iniquities of expence, knowing that every thing will adde to their heap; but then after long sparing, in one night to throw away the wealth of a long purchase, is an imprudence be-

SERMON
XVII.

Hom. Ili. β

becoming none but such persons who are to be kept under Tutors and Guardians, and such as are to be chastised by their servants, and to be punished by them whom they clothe and feed.

— ἀλλὰ ὅτι
αἰ γὰρ τοὶ δεδωκεν τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὸν πλοῦτον καὶ τὴν δύναμιν.

These men sowe much, and gather little, stay long and return empty, and after a long voyage they are dashed in pieces when their vessels are laden with the spoils of provinces. Every deadly sin destroyes the rewards of a seven years piety; I adde to this, that God is more impatient at a sin committed by his servants, then at many by persons that are his enemies; and an uncivil answer from a son to a Father, from an obliged person to a benefactor is a greater undecency, then if any enemy should storm his house or revile him to his head. Augustus Cæsar taxed all the world, and God took no publick notices of it; but when David taxed and numbred a petty province, it was not to be expiated without a plague; because such persons, besides the direct sin, adde the circumstance of ingratitude to God, who hath redeemed them from their vain conversation and from death, and from hell, and consigned them to the inheritance of sons, and giving them his grace and his spirit, and many periods of comfort, and a certain hope and visible earnest of immortality; nothing is baser then that such a person against his reason, against his interest, against his God, against so many obligations, against his custome, against his very habits and acquired inclinations should do an action

Quam nisi seductus nequeas committere Divis

Which a man must for ever be a shamed of, and like Adam must run from God himself to do it, and depart from the state in which he had placed all his hopes, and to which he had designed all his labours. The consideration is effective enough, if we sum up the particulars; for he that hath lived well, and then falls into a deliberate sin, is infinitely dishonoured, is most imprudent, most unsafe, and most unthankful.

2. Let persons tempted to the single instances of sin in the midst of a laudable life, be very carefull that they suffer not themselves to be drawn aside by the eminency of great examples. For some think drunkenness hath a little honesty derived unto it by the examples of Noah, and Adultery is not so scandalous and intolerably dishonourable, since Bathsheba bathed, and David was defiled, and men

A men think a fight is no cowardise, if a General turns his head and runs.

Pompeio fugiente timens.

B Well might all the gowned Romans fear when Pompey fled, and who is there that can hope to be more righteous then David, or stronger then Samson, or have lesse hypocrisy then Saint Peter, or be more temperate then Noah? These great examples bear men of weak discourses and weaker resolutions from the severity of vertues. But as Diagoras to them that shewed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwrack upon their prayers and vows to Neptune, answered, that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed, and yet were drowned: So do these men keep catalogues of those few persons who broke the threed of a fair life in sunder with the violence of a great crime, and by the grace of God recovered and repented and lived; But they consider not concerning those infinite numbers of men, who died in their first fit of sicknesse, who after a fair voyage have thrown themselves over boord, and perished in a sudden wildnesse. One said well, *Si quid Socrates, aut Aristippus contra morem & consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur licere. Magnis enim illi & divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequabantur.* If Socrates did any unusual thing, it is not for thee who art of an ordinary vertue to assume the same license; For he by a divine and excellent life hath obtained leave or pardon respectively, for what thou must never hope for, till thou hast arrived to the same glories First, be as devout as David, as good a Christian as Saint Peter, and then thou wilt not dare with designe to act that, which they fell into by surprize; and if thou dost fall as they did, by that time thou hast also repented like them, it may be said concerning thee, that thou didst fall and break thy bones, but God did heal thee and pardon thee. Remember that all the damned souls shall bear an eternity of torments for the pleasures of a short sinfulness; but for a single transient action, to die for ever is an intolerable exchange, and the effect of so great a folly, that whosoever falls into and then considers it, it will make him mad and distracted for ever.

3. Remember, that since no man can please God, or be partakers of any promises, or reap the reward of any actions in the returns of eternity, unlesse he performs to God an infinite duty, according to the capacities of a man so taught, and so tempted, and so assisted, such a person must be curious that he be not cozened with the duties and performances of any one relation. 1. Some there are that think all our religion consists in prayers and publick or private offices of devotion, and not in moral actions or entercourses of justice and temperance, of kindness and friendships, of

SERMON
XVII.

of sincerity and liberality, of chastity and humility, of repentance and obedience: indeed no humour is so easie to be counterfeited as devotion, and yet no hypocrisy is more common among men, nor any so uselesse as to God; for it being an addresse to him alone who knows the heart and all the secret purposes, it can do no service in order to heaven, so long as it is without the power of Godlinesse, and the energy and vivacity of a holy life. God will not suffer us to commute a duty, because all is his due; and religion shall not pay for the want of temperance: if the devoutest Hermit be proud, or he that fasts thrice in the week be uncharitable once; or he that gives much to the poor, gives also too much liberty to himself, he hath planted a fair garden, and invited a wilde boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit trees, and his guest being something rude hath disordered his paradise, and made it become a wilderness. 2. Others there are that judge themselves by the censures that Kings and Princes give concerning them, or as they are spoken of by their betters, and so make false judgements concerning their condition. For our betters, to whom we show our best parts, to whom we speak with caution and consider what we represent, they see our arts and our dressings, but nothing of our nature and deformities; Trust not their censures concerning thee, but to thy own opinion of thy self, whom thou knowest in thy retirements and natural pceivibnesse and unhandsome inclinations, and secret baseness. 3. Some men have been admired abroad, in whom the wife and the servant never saw any thing excellent: *a rare judge and a good common-wealths man* in the streets and publike meetings, and *a just man* to his neighbour, and *charitable to the poor*; for in all these places the man is observed and kept in awe by the Sun, by light and by voices; But this man is a Tyrant at home, an unkinde husband and ill Father, an imperious Master, and such men are like prophets in their own countreys, not honoured at home, and can never be honoured by God, who will not endure that many vertues should excuse a few vices, or that any of his servants shall take pensions of the Devil, and in the profession of his service do his enemy single advantages.

4. He that hath past many stages of a good life to prevent his being tempted to a single sin, must be very careful that he never entertain his spirit with the remembrances of his past sin, nor amuse it with the phantastick apprehensions of the present. When the Israelites fancied the lapidnesse and relish of the fleshpots, they longed to tast and to return.

So when a Libyan Tiger drawn from his wilder forragings is shut up and taught to eat civil meat, and suffer the authority of a man, he sits down tamely in his prison and payes to his keeper fear and reverence for his meat: But if he chance to come again and

*Hic ubi diffu-
eta sylvis in
carcere clausa
Maneuere
ferat. Et vul-
tus posuere mi-
naces
Atque homi-
nem didicere
pari si torrida
perous
Venit in ora
et uor, redeunt
rabiesq; fu-
torque.*

A and taste a draught of warm blood, he presently leaps into his naturall cruelty.

*Admonite tumēt gustato sanguine fauces,
Fervet & a trepido vix abstinet ira Magistro.*

B He scarce abstains from eating those hands that brought him discipline and food: so is the nature of a man made tame and gentle by the grace of God, and reduced to reason, and kept in awe by religion and lawes, and by an awfull vertue is taught to forget those alluring and fottish relishes of sin: but if he diverts from his path, and snatches handfuls from the wanton vineyards, and remembers the lasciviousnesse of his unwholsome food that pleased his childish palate, then he grows sick again, and hungry after unwholsome diet, and longs for the apples of Sodom. A man must walk thorow the world without eyes, or ears, fancy, or appetite, but such as are created and sanctified by the grace of God; and being once made a new man, he must serve all the needs of nature by the appetites and faculties of grace: nature must be wholly a servant, and we must so look towards the delicioussnesse of our religion, and the ravishments of heaven, that our memory must be for ever uselesse to the affairs and perceptions of sin: we cannot stand, we cannot live, unlesse we be curious and watchfull in this particular.

C By these and all other arts of the Spirit, if we stand upon our guard, never indulging to our selves one sin, because it is but one; as knowing that one sin brought in death upon all the world, and one sin brought slavery upon the posterity of Cham: and alwayes fearing lest death surprize us in that one sin; we shall by the grace of God, either not need, or else easily perceive the effects and blessings of that compassion which God reserves in the secrets of his mercy, for such persons whom his grace hath ordained and disposed with excellent dispositions unto life eternall.

D These are the sorts of men which are to be used with compassion; concerning whom we are to make a difference, *making a difference*] so sayes the Text, and it is of high concernment that we should do so, that we may relieve the infirmities of the men, and relieve their sicknesses, and transcribe the copy of the Divine mercy, who loves not to *quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed.* For although all sins are against Gods commandements, directly, or by certain consequents, *by line, or by analogy,* yet they are not all of the same tincture and mortality.

*Nec vincit ratio tantundem ut pescet idemque,
Qui senecros caules alieni frugerit horti,
Ut qui nocturnus Divum sacra legerit.*

E He that robs a garden of Coleworts, and carries away an armfull of Spinage, does not deserve hell, as he that steals the Chalice from the Church, or betrayes a Prince; and therefore men are distinguished accordingly:

SERMON
XVII.*Est inter Tanaim quiddam sacerdosque Viselli.*

The Poet that Sejanus condemned for dishonouring the memory of *Agamemnon*, was not an equall criminall with *Cataline*, or *Gracchus*: and *Simon Magus* and the *Nicolaitans* committed crimes which God hated, more then the complying of *S. Barnabas*; or the dissimulation of *S. Peter*; and therefore God does treat these persons severally: Some of these are restrained with a fit of sicknesse, some with a great losse; and in these three are degrees, and some arrive at death. And in this manner God scourged the *Corinthians* for their irreverent and disorderly receiving the Holy Sacrament. For although even the least of the sins that I have discoursed of, will lead to death eternall, if their course be not interrupted, and the disorder chastised, yet because we do not stop their progresse instantly, God many times does, and visits us with proportionable judgements, and so not onely checks the rivulet from swelling into rivers and a vastnesse, but plainly tells us, that although smaller crimes shall not be punished with equall severity as the greatest, yet even in hell there are eternal rods as well as eternal scorpions; and the smallest crime that we act with an infant-malice, and manly deliberation, shall be revenged with the lesser stroaks of wrath; but yet with the infliction of a sad eternity. But then that we also should make a difference, is a precept concerning Church discipline, and therefore not here proper to be considered, but onely as it may concern our own particulars in the actions of repentance; and our brethren in fraternal correction:

— affit

*Regula quæ penas peccatis irroget aquas,
Nec sententiâ dignum horribili sceleris flagello.*

Let us be sure that we neglect no sin, but repent for every one, and judge our selves for every one, according to the proportion of the malice, or the scandall, or the danger. And although in this there is no fear that we would be excessive; yet when we are to reprove a brother we are sharp enough, and either by pride, or by animosity, by the itch of government, or the indignation of an angry minde, we run beyond the gentlenesse of a Christian Monitor: we must remember that by Christs law some are to be admonished privately, some to be shamed and corrected publikely, and beyond these, there is an *abscission*, or a cutting off from the communion of faithfull people, *A delivering over to Satan*. And to this purpose is that old reading of the words of my Text, which is still in some Copies, *et non se idcirco dixerunt; Reprove them sharply, when they are convinced, or separate by sentence*. But because this also is a designe of mercy, acted with an instance of discipline, it is a punishment of the flesh, that the soul may be saved

in

A in the day of the Lord, it means the same with the usuall reading, and with the last words of the Text, and teaches us our usage towards the worst of recoverable sinners.

B Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Some sins there are, which in their own nature are damnable, and some are such as will certainly bring a man to damnation; the first are curable, but with much danger; the second are desperate and irrecoverable: when a man is violently tempted, and allured with an object that is proportionable and pleasant to his vigorous appetite, and his unabated, unmortified nature, this man falls into death, but yet we pity him as we pity a thief that robs for his necessity: this man did not tempt himself, but his spirit suffers violence, and his reason is invaded, and his infirmities are mighty, and his aids not yet prevailing: But when this single temptation hath prevailed for a single instance, and leaves a relish upon the palate, and this produces another, and that also is fruitfull and swells into a family and kindred of sinne, that is, it grows first into approbation, then to a clear assent, and an untroubled conscience, thence into frequency, from thence unto a custom, and easinesse, and a habit, this man is fallen into the fire. There are also some single acts of so great a malice, that they must suppose a man habitually sinfull before he could arrive at that height of wickednesse. No man begins his sinfull course with killing of his father or his Prince; and Simon Magus had preambulatory impieties: he was covetous and ambitious, long before he offered to buy the Holy Ghost.

C *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus* — and although such actions may have in them the malice and the mischief, the disorder and the wrong, the principle and the permanent effect, of a habit and a long course of sin, yet because they never or very seldom go alone, but after the prædisposition of other huihering crimes, we shall not amisse comprise them under the name of habituall sins. For such they are, either formally, or equivalently: and if any man hath fallen into a sinfull habit, into a course and order of sinning, his case is little lesser then desperate; but that little hope that is remanent hath its degree, according to the infancy or the growth of the habit. 1. For all sins lesse then habituall, it is certain, a pardon is ready to penitent persons: that is, to all that sin in ignorance, or in infirmity, by surprize, or inadvertency, in smaller instances, or in frequent returns, with involuntary actions, or imperfect resolutions, *Ἐν τῇ αἰσῇ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, καὶ τῇ ἀσυνέτῳ* said Clemens in his Epistle: Lift up your hands to Almighty G O D, and pray him to be mercifull to you in all things when you sinne unwillingly; that is, in which you sin with an imperfect choice: for no man sins against his will directly, but when his understanding is abused by an in-

SERMON
XVII.

evitable, or an intolerable weaknesse, or wills follow their blind guide, and are not the perfect mistresses of their own actions, and therefore leave a way and easinesse to repent, and be ashamed of it, and therefore a possibility and readinesse for pardon. And these are the sins that we are taught to pray to God that he would pardon, as he gives us our bread, that is, every day. For in many things we offend all, said Saint James, that is, in many smaller matters, in matters of surprize, or inevitable infirmity: And therefore Posidonius said, that Saint Austin was used to say, That he would not have even good and holy Priests go from this world without the susception of equall and worthy penances: and the most innocent life in our account is not a competent instrument of a peremptory confidence, and of justifying our selves: *I am guilty of nothing*, (said Saint Paul) that is, of no ill intent, or negligence in preaching the Gospel, yet *I am not hereby justified*, for God it may be knows many little irregularities, and insinuations of sin. In this case we are to make a difference; but humility, and prayer, and watchfulnesse, are the direct instruments of the expiation of such sins.

But then secondly, whosoever sins without these abating circumstances, that is, in great instances, in which a mans understanding cannot be cozened; as in drunkennes, murder, adultery, and in the frequent repetitions of any sort of sinne whatsoever; in which a mans choice cannot be surprized, and in which it is certain there is a love of the sinne, and a delight in it, and a power over a mans resolutions; in these cases it is a miraculous grace, and an extraordinary change, that must turn the current and the stream of the iniquity: and when it is begun, the pardon is more uncertain, and the repentance more difficult, and the effect much abated, and the man must bee made miserable that hee may not bee accursed for ever.

I say his pardon is uncertain, because there are some finnes which are unpardonable, (as I shall shew) and they are not all named in particular, and the degrees of malice being uncertain, the salvation of that man is to be wrought with infinite fear and trembling. It was the case of Simon Magus, *Repent and ask pardon for thy sinne, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may bee forgiven thee.* If peradventure;] it was a new crime, and concerning its possibility of pardon no revelation had been made, and by analogie to other crimes it was very like an unpardonable sin; for it was a thinking a thought against the Holy Ghost, and that was next to speaking a word against him. Cains sin was of the same nature; it is greater then it can be forgiven, his passion and his fear was too severe and decratory: it was pardonable; but truly we never finde that God did pardon it.

2. But besides this, it is uncertain in the pardon, because it may be the time of pardon is passed, and though God hath pardoned

Acts 7.22

2.

A. doth to other people the same sin, and to them too sometimes before; yet it may be he will not now: he hath not promised pardon so often as we sin, and in all the returns of impudence, apostacy, and ingratitude; and it may be *thy day is past*, as was Jerusalem in the day that they crucified the Saviour of the world.

B. 3. Pardon of such habitual sins is uncertain, because life is uncertain; and such sins require much time for their abolition and expiation. And therefore although these sins are not *necessario mortificati*; that is, unpardonable, yet by consequence they become deadly, because our life may be cut off before we have finished or performed those necessary parts of repentance, which are the severe and yet the only condition of getting pardon. So that you may perceive, that not onely every great single crime, but the habit of any sin is dangerous; and therefore these persons are to be *snatched* from the fire, if you mean to rescue them, *in 20 vultu de p. 208.* if you stay a day, it may be you stay too long.

C. 4. To which I adde this fourth consideration, that every delay of return is in the case of habitual sins an approach to desperation, because the nature of habits is like that of Crocodiles, they grow as long as they live; and if they come to *obstinacy*, or *confirmation*, they are in hell already, and can never return back. For so the Pannonian Bears, when they have clasped a dart in the region of their Liver, wheel themselves upon the wound, and with anger and malicious revenge strike the deadly barbe deeper, and cannot be quit from that fatal steel, but in flying bear along that which themselves make the instrument of a more hasty death: so is every vicious person struck with a deadly wound, and his own hands forced it into the entertainments of his heart. And because it is painfull to draw it forth by a sharp and salutary repentance, he still soule and turns upon his wound, and carries his death in his bowels, where it first entered by choice, and then dwelt by love, and at last shall finish the tragedy by divine judgements, and an unalterable decree.

D. But as the pardon of these sins is uncertain, so the conditions of restitution are hard even to them, who shall be pardoned: their pardon and themselves too, must be fetched from the fire; water will not do it, tears and ineffective sorrow cannot take off a habit, or a great crime.

*Omniun faciles, qui tristia crimina cadit,
Tolle stymined posse putatis aqua.*

E. Bion seeing a Prince weep and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked if baldness would cure his grief? such pompous sorrows may be good indices, but no perfect instruments of restitution. Saint James plainly declares the possibilities of pardon to great sins, in the cases of *fornication, adultery, lust, and envy*, which are the four great indecencies that are most contrary to Christianity; and in the 5. Chap.

Chap. 4.1,3.

SERMON
XVII.

Cha. 4. ver. ult.

he implies also a possibility of pardon to an habitual sinner, whom he calls, *ἁμαρτωλὸς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας*, one that erres from the truth; that is, from the life of a Christian, the life of the Spirit of truth: and he adds, that such a person may be reduced and so be pardoned, though he have sinned long; *he that converts such a one shall hide a multitude of sins*: But then the way that he appoints for the restitution of such persons is *humility, and humiliation, penances, and sharp penitentiall sorrows, and afflictions, resisting the Devil, returning to God, weeping and mourning, confessions and prayers*, as you may read at large in the 4. and 5. Chapters; and there it is, that you should finde it a duty, that such persons should be *afflicted*, and should *confesse to their brethren*; and these are harder conditions then God requires in the former cases; these are a kinde of fiery tryall.

I have now done with my Text, and should adde no more, but that the nature of these sins is such, that they may increase in their *weight, and duration, and malice*, and then they increase in *mischiefe, and fatality*, and so go beyond the Text. Cicero said well, *ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur & lubrica*, l. 4. Acad. Qu. The very custome of consenting in the matters of civility is dangerous and slippery, and will quickly engage us in error, and then we think we are bound to defend them, or else we are made flatterers by it, and so become vitious; and we love our own vices that we are used to, and keep them till they are incurable, that is, till we will never repent of them; and some men resolve never to repent, that is, they resolve they will not be saved, *they tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant*; those persons are in the fire too, but they will not be pulled out: concerning whom Gods Prophets must say as once concerning Babylon, *Curavimus & non est sanata, derelinquamus eam*, We would have healed them, but they would not be healed, let us leave them in their sins, and they shall have enough of it; Only this, those that put themselves out of the condition of mercy are not to be endured in Christian societies; they deserve it not, and it is not safe that they should be suffered.

But besides all this, I shall name one thing more unto you; for

*nunquam adeo sedis adeoque pudemus
Ut imur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint.*

There are some single actions of sin of so great a malice, that in their own nature they are beyond the limit of Gospel pardon: they are not such things for the pardon of which God entered into covenant; because they are such sins which put a man into perfect indispositions, and incapacities of entering into, or being in the covenant. In the first ages of the world, *Atheisme* was of that nature; it was against their whole religion; and the sin is worse now, against the whole religion still, and against a brighter light. In the ages after the flood *idolatry* was also just such another: for as God was known first only

A ly as the creator, then he began to manifest himself in special contracts with men, and he quickly was declared the God of Israel, and idolatry perfectly destroyed all that religion, and therefore was never pardoned intirely; but God did visit it upon them that lived; and when he pardoned it in some degrees, yet he also punished it in some; and yet rebellion against the supreme power of Moses and Aaron was worse; for that also is a perfect destruction of the whole religion, because it refused to submit to those hands upon which God had placed all the religion, and all the government. And now if we would know in the Gospel what answers these precedent sins? I answer, first the same

B sins acted by a resolute hand and heart are worse now then ever they were: and a third or fourth is also to be added; and that is *Apostacy* or a voluntary malicious renouncing the faith: The Church hath often declared that sin to be unpardonable: *witchcraft* or *final impenitence*, and *obstinacy* in any sin are infallibly desperate: and in general, and by a certain parity of reason, whatsoever does destroy charity or the good life of a Christian with the same general venom and delectery as *Apostacy* destroys faith; and he that is a *Renegado* from charity, is as unpardonable as he that returns to solemn *Atheism* or *infidelity*: for all that, is directly the sin against the holy Ghost, that is a throwing that away whereby onely we can be Christians, whereby onely we can hope to be saved; to speak a word against the holy Ghost in the Pharises, was declared unpardonable, because it was such a word which if it had been true, or beleaved, would have destroyed the whole religion; for they said that Christ wrought by Beelzebub, and by consequence did not come from God: He that destroys all the whole order of Priesthood, destroys one of the greatest parts of the religion, and one of the greatest effects of the holy Ghost: He that destroys government destroys another part; but that we may come neerer to our selves; to quench the spirit of God is worse then to speak some words against him; to grieve the spirit of God is a part of the same impiety, ~~to resist the holy Ghost~~ another part, and if we consider, that every great sin does this in its proportion, it would concern us to be carefull, lest we fall into *presumptuous* sins, lest they get the dominion over us; out of this that I have spoken you may easily gather what sort of men those are, who cannot be snatched from the fire; for whom as *St. John* saies, *we are not to pray*, and how need men come to it that continue in any known sin; if I should descend to particulars; I might lay a snare to scrupulous and pious consciences. This onely every confirmed habitual sinner does manifest

E the divine justice in punishing the sins of a short life with a never dying worm, and a never quenched flame, because he hath an affection to sin that no time will diminish; but such as would increase to eternal ages; and accordingly as any man hath a degree of love to his lust lodged in his soul a spark, which unless it be speedily and effectively quenched, will break forth into unquenchable fire.

SERMON
XVIII.

Sermon. XVIII.

THE
FOOLISH
EXCHANGE.

Matthew 16. Ver. 26.

*For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world,
and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange
for his soul?*



When the eternal wisdom of God had decreed to re-
deem mankind from misery and infelicity, and to
commenced over his own justice, the excellent
wisdom of God resolved to do it in ways con-
trary to the appetites and designs of man,
that it also might triumph over our weaknesses
and imperfect conceptions. So God decreeing to
glorify his mercy by curing our sins, and to exalt his wisdom
by the reproof of our ignorance, and the repenting upon what
we held false principles, we had built our hopes and expecta-
tions of felicity: Pleasure and profit, victory over our enemies, rich-
es and pompous honour, power and greatness, and greatness according to
sensual appetites, and persecutions violent and passionate of those
appetites, these things we held most precious, and without poverty
or persecution.

Hec

- A *Hac sunt jucundissima Martiali, virtutis quo faciunt beatorem.*
- B These are the measures of good and evil, the object of our hopes and fears; the securing our content and the portion of this world; and for the other, let it be as it may. But the Blessed Jesus having made revelations of an immortal duration, of another world; and of a strange restitution to it, even by the resurrection of the body, and a new investiture of the soul, with the same upper garment, clarified, and made pure so as no Fuller on earth can whiten it;
- C hath also preached a new Philosophy, hath cancelled all the old principles, reduced the appetites of sense to the discourses of reason, and heightened reason to the sublimities of the spirit, teaching us abstractions, and immaterial conceptions, giving us new eyes and new objects, and new proportions; For now, sensual pleasures are not delightful, riches are dross, honours are nothing but the appendages of vertue, and in relation to it are to receive their account; but now if you would enjoy life, you must die; if you would be at ease, you must take up Christs crosse, and conform to his sufferings, if you would save your life, you must lose it, and if you would be rich, you must abound in good works, you must be poor in spirit and despise the world, and be rich unto God; for whatsoever is contrary to the purchases and affections of this world is an endearment of our hopes in the world to come; and therefore hee having stated the question so, that either we must quit this world or the other, our affections I mean, and adherencies to this, or our interest and hopes of the other: the choice is rendered very easie by the words of my Text, because the distance is not lesse then infinite, and the comparison hath terms of a vast difference, heaven and hell, eternity and a moment, vanity and real felicity, life and death eternal, all that can be hoped for, and all that can be feared; these are the terms of our choice; and if a man have his wits about him, and be not drunk with sensuality, and senselesse, he need not much to dispute before he passe the sentence. For nothing can be given to us to recompence the losse of heaven, and if our souls be lost, there is nothing remaining to us whereby wee can be happy.
- D *What shall it profit a man? or what shall a man give?* is there any exchange for a mans soul? the question is an *adversus* of the negative. Nothing can be given for an *anima sua*, or a price to satisfie for its losse.
- E The blood of the Son of God was given to recover it, or as an *advantage* to Gods; and when our souls were forfeit to him, nothing lesse then the life and passion of GOD and man could pay the price. (I say) to GOD, who yet was not concerned in the losse

save

SERMON
XVIII.

save onely that such was his goodnesse, that it pitied him to see his creature lost. But to us what shall be the *arramania*? what can make us recompence when we have lost our own souls, and are lost in a miserable eternity? what can then recompence us? not all the world, not ten thousand worlds; and of this that miserable man whose soul is lost, is the best judge. For the question is *admirabile*, and hath a potential signification, and means *quoniam de deo*, that is, suppose a man ready to die, condemned to the sentence of a horrid death, heightned with all the circumstances of trembling and amazement; what would he give to save his life? *eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and all that a man hath will hee give for his life*: and this turned to a proverb among the Jews; for so the last words of the text are, *in solam animam suam dimittit eam*; which proverb being usually meant concerning a temporall death, and was intended, to represent the sadnesse of a condemned person, our blessed Saviour fits to his own purpose, and translates to the signification of death eternall, which he first revealed clearly to the world; and because no interest of the world can make a man recompence for his life, because to lose that, makes him incapable of enjoying the exchange, (and he were a strange fool who having no designe upon immortality or vertue, should be willing to be hanged for a thousand pound *per annum*) this argument increases infinitely in the purpose of our Blessed Saviour; and to gain the world, and to lose our souls in the Christian sence is infinitely more madnesse, and a worse exchange, then when our souls signifie nothing but a temporall life; and because possibly the indefinite hopes of Elysium, or an honourable name, might tempt some hardy persons to leave this world, hoping for a better condition, even among the Heathens; yet no excuse will acquit a Christian from madnesse, if for the purchase of this world hee lose his eternitie.

Here then first we will consider the propositions of the exchange, the world and a mans soul, by way of supposition, supposing all that is propounded were obtained; *the whole world*. Secondly we will consider what is likely to be obtained *really*, and *indeed* of the world, and what are really the miseries of a lost soul? For it is propounded in the text by way of supposition: *If a man should gain the world*, which no man ever did, nor ever can; and he that gets most, gets too little to be exchanged for a temporall life. And thirdly, I shall apply it to your practise, and make *materiall* considerations.

I. First, then suppose a man gets all the world, what is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a phantasme, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us, by parts, and by succession; He that hath all the world, (if we can suppose such

A such a man) cannot have a dish of fresh summer fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig: and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore, all the fish and wealth within all its hollowneses are his, but he is never the better, for what he cannot get. All the shell fishes that produce pearl, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements; so that it will signifie as much to this great purchaser, to be intitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the aire; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the Philosophy of her minerals.

2. I consider that he that is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection but in common with the inferiour persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest Prince inclose the Sun, and set one little star in his cabinet for his own use? or secure to himself the gentle and benigne influence of any one constellation? Are not his subjects fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

C Nay those things which he esteems his ornament and his singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself. For suppose his garments splendid and shining like the robe of a cherub or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys, is that they keep him warm, and clean and modest; and all this is done by clean and lesse pompous vestments; and the beauty of them which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meretricious painting of a wanton woman made wholly to be looked on, that is to be enjoyed by every one but himself; and the fairest face and the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflection. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gayety, and the gay man in his greatest bravery is onely pleased because I am pleased with the sight: so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency, from the delight that I have, not from any inherency of his own possession.

E The poorest Artizan of Rome walking in Cæsars gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministred to their Lord: and although it may be he was put to gather fruits to eat, from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cæsars: the birds made him as good musick, the flowers gave him as sweet smells, he there sucked as good aire, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception, as the prince himself: save onely that Caesar paid for all that pleasure vast summes of money, the blood and treasure of a pro-

SERMON
XVIII.

province, which the poor man had for nothing. A
 3. Suppose a man Lord of all the world; (for still we are but in supposition) yet since every thing is received, not according to its own greatnesse and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver; it signifies very little as to our content; or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a Lion a fair meadow full of hay, or a thousand quince trees, or should give to the goodly Bull, the master and the fairest of the whole herd, a thousand fair Stags; If a man should present to a childe a ship laden with Persian carpets, and the ingredients of the rich scarlet, all these being either disproportionate to the appetite or to the understanding, could adde nothing of content, and might declare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the receiver: and so it does if God should give the whole world to any man; He knows not what to do with it; he can use no more but according to the capacities of a man. He can use nothing but meat and drink and cloths; and infinite riches that can give him changes of raiment every day, and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats, it signifies no more but wantonnesse, and variety to the same, not to any new purposes; He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater then a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him; He needs the understanding of an Angel to take the accounts of his estate; He had need have a stomach like fire or the grave: for else he can eat no more then one of his healthfull subjects, and unlesse he hath an eye like the Sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven; the pleasures of his eye can be no greater then to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packt up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of Jewels better then which there is no man that sees at all but sees every day; For not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a mans, or a womans, or a haukes eye is more beauteous and excellent, then all the Jewels of his crown. And when we remember, that a beast who hath quicker senses then a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception, it will follow, that understanding and knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing hath a capacity to become happy, which a lesse knowing prince or a rich person hath not: and in this onely a mans capacity is capable of enlargement: but then although they onely have power to relish any pleasure rightly, who rightly understand the nature and degrees and essences, and ends of things, yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and the unsatisfyingnesse of the things of this world, so that the relish which could not be great, but in a great understanding appears contemptible B
C
D
E

A temprible, because its vanity appears at the same time; the understanding sees all, and seeethorow it.

4. The greatest vanity of this world is remarkable in this, that all its joyes summed up together are not big enough to counterpoise the evil of one sharp discase, or to allay a sorrow. For imagine a man great in his Dominion as Cyrus, rich as Solomon, victorious as David, beloved like Titus, learned as Trismegist, powerful as all the Roman greatnesse, all this, and the results of all this, give him no more pleasure in the midst of a feaver, or the tortures of the stone,

B Indeed the excellency of a holy conscience is a comfort and a magazine of joy, so great, that it sweetens the most bitter portion of the world, and makes tortures and death, not onely tolerable, but amiable; and therefore to part with this whose excellency is so great, for the world that is of so inconsiderable a worth, as not to have in it recompence enough, for the sorrows of a sharp discase, is a bargain fit to be made by none but fools and mad-men. Antiochus, Epiphanes, and Herod the great, and his grand-child Agrippa, were sad instances of this great truth; to every of which it happened that the grandeur of their fortune, the greatnesse of their possessions, and the encrease of their estate disappeared, and expired like Camphire at their arrest, by those several sharp diseases, which covered their head with Cypressse, and hid their crowns in an inglorious grave.

C For what can all the world minister to a sick person? If it represents all the spoils of nature, and the choicest delicacies of land and sea. Alas his appetite is lost, and to see a pibble-stone is more pleasing to him: For he can look upon that without loathing, but not so upon the most delicious fare that ever made famous the Roman luxury. Perfumes make his head ake; if you load him with jewels, you presse him with a burden as troublesome as his grave-stone: D and what pleasure is in all those possessions, that cannot make his pillow easie, nor tame the rebellion of a tumultuous humour, nor restore the use of a withered hand, or straighten a crooked finger: vain is the hope of that man whose soul rests upon vanity, and such unprofitable possessions.

E Suppose a man lord of all this world, an universal Monarch, as some Princes have lately designed, all that cannot minister content to him; not that content which a poor contemplative man by the strength of Christian Philosophy, and the support of a very small fortune daily does enjoy. All his power & greatnesse cannot command the sea to overflow his shores, or to stay from the retiring to the opposite strand. It cannot make his children dutiful or wise; and though the world admired at the greatnesse of Philip the second's fortune in the accession of Portugal and the East Indies to his Principalities, yet this could not allay the infelicity of his family, and the unhand some-
ness

SERMON
XVIII.

ness of his condition in having a proud, and indiscreet, and a vicious young Prince likely to inherit all his greatness. And if nothing appears in the face of such a fortune, to tell all the world that it is spotted and imperfect; yet there is in all conditions of the world, such weariness and tediousness of the spirits, that a man is ever more pleased with hopes of going off for the present, than in dwelling upon that condition which it may be others admire, and think beautiful, but none knoweth the smart of it, but hee that drinke off the little pleasure, and felt the ill relish of the appendage. How many Kings have groaned under the burden of their crowns, and have sunk down and died? How many have quitted their pompous cares, and retired into private lives, there to enjoy the pleasures of Philosophy and Religion, which their thrones denied?

And if we consider the supposition of the Text, the thing will demonstrate it self. For he who can be supposed the owner and purchaser of the whole world, must either be a King or a private person. A private person can hardly be supposed to be the man. For if he be subject to another, how can hee be Lord of the whole world? But if he be a King, it is certain, that his cares are greater then any mans, his fears are bigger, his evils mountainous, the accidents that discompose him are more frequent, and sometimes intolerable: and of all his great possessions he hath not the greatest use and benefit. But they are like a great harvest which more labourers must bring in, and more must eat of; onely hee is the centre of all the cares, and they fix upon him; but the profits run out to all the lines of the circle: to all that are about him; whose good is therefore greater then the good of the Prince; Because what they enjoy is the purchase of the Princes care; and so they feed upon his cost.

Horat. l. i. sat. 3

Privatusque magis vivam se Rege beatus.

Servants live the best lives: for their care is single, onely how to please their Lord; but all the burden of a troublesome providence, and ministration, makes the outside pompous and more full of ceremony; but they intricate the condition, and disturb the quiet of the great possessor.

And imagine a person as blest as can be supposed upon the stock of worldly interest; when all his accounts are cast up, he differs nothing from his subjects, or his servants, but in meer circumstance, nothing of reality or substance. He hath more to wait at his Table, or persons of higher rank to do the meanest offices; more ceremonies of address, a fairer Escutcheon, louder Titles; But can his multitude of dishes make him have a good stomach, or does not satiety cloy it: when his high diet is such, that he is not capable

Rare volte ha
fame chista
sempre à tavola

A capable of being feasted, and knows not the frequent delights, and oftener possibilities, a poor man hath of being refreshed, while not onely his labour makes hunger. and so makes his meat delicate; (and then it cannot be ill fare, let it be what it will) but also his provision is such, that every little addition is a direct feast to him, while the great owner of the world giving to himself the utmost of his desires, hath nothing left beyond his ordinary, to become the entertainment of his festival dayes, but more loads of the same meat. And then let him consider how much of felicity can this condition contribute to him. In which he is not further gone beyond a person of a little fortune, in the greatnesse of his possession, then he is fallen short in the pleasures and possibility of their enjoyment.

B And that is a sad condition, when like Midas all that the man touches shall turn to gold: and his is no better, to whom a perpetual full table not recreated with fasting, nor made pleasant with intervening scarcity ministers no more good then a heap of gold does, that is, he hath no benefit of it, save the beholding of it with his eyes. Cannot a man quench his thirst as well out of an Urn or Chalice, as out of a whole River? It is an ambitious thirst, and a pride of draught, that had rather lay his mouth to Euphrates then to a petty goblet; but if he had rather, it addes not so much to his content, as to his danger, and his vanity.

— eo fit

*Plenior ut si quos delectet copia iusto,
Cum ripâ simul avulsos ferat Ausidus acer.*

D For so I have heard of persons whom the river hath swept away, together with the Turf they pressed, when they stooped to drown their pride rather then their thirst.

E 6. But this supposition hath a lessening tearm. If a man could be born heir of all the world, it were something: But no man ever was so; except him onely who enjoyed the least of it, the Son of man, that had not where to lay his head: but in the supposition it is; [If a man could [gain] the whole world,] which supposes labour and sorrow, trouble and expence, venture and hazard, and so much time expired in its acquist and purchase, that besides the possession is not secured to us for terme of life, yet our lives are almost expired before we become estated in our purchases. And indeed it is a sad thing to see an ambitious, or a covetous person make his life unpleasant, troublesome, and vexatious, to grasp a power bigger then himself; To fight for it with infinite hazards of his life, so that it is a thousand to one but he perishes in the attempt, and gets nothing at all, but an untimely grave, a reproachful memory, and an early damnation. But suppose he gets a victory, and

SARMOON
XVIII.

that the unhappy party is but to begin a new game, then to see the fears, the watchfulness, the diligence, the laborious arts to secure a possession, lest the desperate party should recover a desperate game: And suppose this with a new stock of labours, danger, and expence, be seconded by a new success; then to look upon the new emergencies, and troubles, and discontents among his friends, about parting the spoil, the envies, the jealousies, the slanders, the under-minings, and the perpetual insecurity of his condition; all this I say, is to see a man take infinite pains to make himself miserable; but if he will be so unlearned, as to call this gallantry, or a splendid fortune, yet by this time when he remembers, he hath certainly spent much of his time in trouble; and how long he shall enjoy this he is still uncertain; he is not certain of a moneth, and suppose it be seven yeers, yet when he comes to die, and cast up his accounts, and shall finde nothing remaining, but a sad remembrance of evils, and troubles past, and expectations of worse, infinitely worse, he must acknowledge himself convinced, that to gain all this world is a fortune not worth the labour and the dangers, the fears and transportations of passions, though the souls losse bee not considered in the bargain.

But I told you all this while, that this is but a supposition still, the putting of a case, or like a fiction of law, nothing real: for if we consider in the second place, how much every man is likely to get really, and how much it is possible for any man to get, we shall finde the account far shorter yet, and the purchase most trifling and inconsiderable. For 1. the world is at the same time enjoyed by all its inhabitants, and the same portion of it by severall persons in their severall capacities. A Prince enjoyes his whole kingdom, not as all his people enjoyes it, but in the manner of a Prince; the subjects in the manner of subjects. The Prince hath certain *Regalia* beyond the rest; But the *feudall right* of subjects does them more emolument, and the *Regalia* does the Prince more honour; and these that hold the fees in subordinate right, transmit it also to their Tenants, and beneficiaries, and dependants to publike uses, to charity, and hospitality; all which is a lessening of the lords possessions and a cutting his river into little streams, not that himself alone, but that all his relatives may drink and be refreshed. Thus the Well where the Woman of Samaria fate was Jacobs Well, and he drank of it, but so did his wives, and his children, and his cattel; so that what we call ours, is really ours, but for our portion of expence and use; we have so little of it, that our servants have far more, and that which is ours is nothing but the title, and the care, and the trouble of securing and dispensing; save onely that GOD whose stewards we all are, will call such owners (as they are pleased to call themselves) to strict accounts for their disbursements. And by this account the possession or do-

minion

A minion is but a word, and serves a fancy or a passion, or a vice, but no real end of nature; it is the life and spending it that makes a man, to all real purposes of nature to be the owner of it, and in this the lord and master have but a share; and

B But secondly, consider how far short of the whole world the greatest Prince that ever reigned did come, Alexander that wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, was in his knowledge decided, and brutish, as in his passion; he over-run much of Asia, but he could never pass the Ganges, and never thrust his sword in the bowels of Europe, and knew nothing of America. And the

C or the whole world began to have an appropriate fence, and was rather put to the Romane Greatness as an honourable Appellative, than did signifie that they were lords of the world, who never went beyond Persia, Egypt, nor Britain.

But why do I talk of great things in this Question of the exchange of the soul for the world? Because it is a real bargain, which many men (too many God knows) do make, we must consider it as applicable to practice. Every man that loses his soul for the purchase of the world, must not looke to have the portion of a King. How few men are Princes, and of those that are not born so, how seldom instances are found in story, of persons that by their industry became so? But we must come far lower yet. Thousands there are that damne themselves, and yet their purchase at long-running, and after a base and weary life spent, is but five hundred pounds a year; nay, it may be they onely cozen an easie person out of a good estate, and pay for it at an easie rate, which they obtain by lying, by drinking, by flattery, by force; and the gain is nothing but a thousand pound in the whole, or it may be nothing but a convenience. Nay, how many men hazard their salvation for an acre of ground, for twenty pound, to please a master, to get a small and a kinde usage from a Superiour? These

D men get but little, though they did not give so much for it. So little, that Epictetus thought the purchase dear enough, though you paid nothing for it but flattery, and observance, *ἡ παρεκλήθη ἐφ' ὅτιαν τὴν* *ἡ δὲ ἐλευθερία τοῦ καλῶς ἔχει πολλή* *τὸ δὲ δούλον ἐσθλόν δ' αὐτὸ πολλὴ διαφύλαξις πολλή*

E Observance was the price of his meal, and he paid too dear for one that gave his birth-right for it: but he that exchanges his soul for it, knowes not the vanity of his purchase, nor the value of his losse. He that gains the purchase and spoil of a kingdom, hath got that which to all that are placed in heaven, or to a man that were seated in the paths of the Sun, seem but like a spot in an eye, or a Mathematical point, so without vastnesse, that it seems to be without dimensions. But he whose purchase is but his neighbours field, or a few unjust acres, hath got that which is inconsiderable, below the notice and description of the Map; for by such Hieroglyphicall representations, Socrates chid the vanity of a proud Athenian.

SERMON
XVIII.

3. Although these premises may suffice to shew that the supposed purchase is but vain; and that all which men use really to obtain, is lesse then trifles, yet even the possession of it whatsoever it be is not meer and unmixt, but allaid with sorrow and uneasynesse: the gain hath but enlarged our appetite, and like a draught to an hydropick person, hath enraged his thirst; and still that which he hath not is infinitely bigger then what he hath, since the first enlargement of his purchase was not to satisfie necessity, but his passion, his lust or his avarice, his pride or his revenge, these things cease not by their fewel, but their flames grow bigger, and the capacities are stretched, and they want more then they did at first. For who wants most, he that wants five pound, or he that wants five thousand: And supposing a man naturally supported and provided for, in the dispensations of nature, there is no difference, but that the poor hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich man can never have enough to fill his eye. The poor mans wants are no greater then what may be supplied by charity; and the rich mans wants are so big, that none but Princes can relieve them, and they are left to all the temptations of great vices, and huge cares to make their reparations.

*Dives eget gemmis, Cereali munere pauper,
Sed cum egeant ambo pauper egens minus est.*

If the greatnesse of the worlds possessions produce such fruits, vexation, and care, and want, the ambitious requiring of great estates, is but like the selling of a fountain, to buy a fever, a parting with content, to buy necessity, and the purchase of an unhandsome condition, at the price of infelicity.

4. He that enjoyes a great portion of this world hath most commonly the allay of some great crosse, which although sometimes God designs in mercy, to wean his affections from the world, and for the abstracting them from sordid adherencies and cohabitation, to make his eyes like stars, to fix them in the orbs of heaven, and the regions of felicity, yet they were an inseparable appendant and condition of humanity. Solomon observed the vanity of some persons, that heaped up great riches for their heirs, and yet knew not whether a wise man or a fool should possesse them, this is a great evil under the Sun. And if we observe the great crosses many times God permits in great families, as discontent in marriages, artificall or naturall bastardies, a society of man and wife like the conjunction of two politicks, full of state, and ceremony, and designe, but empty of those sweet careffes, and naturall hearty complications, and endearments, usuall in meaner and innocent persons, the perpetuall sicknesse, fulnesse of diet, fear of dying, the abuse of flatterers, the trouble and noise of company; the tedious

A dious officiousnesse, of impertinent and ceremonious visits, the declension of estate, the sadnesse of spirit, the notoriousnesse of those dishonours which the meanest of lower persons conceals; but their eminency makes us visible, as the spots in the moons face, we shall finde him to be most haypy, that hath most of wisdom, and least of the world, because he onely hath the least danger, and the most security.

B 5. And lastly, his soul so gets nothing that wins all this world; if he loses his soul, that it is ten to one but he that gets the one, therefore shall lose the other; For to a great and opulent fortune sin is so adherent and insinuating, that it comes to him in the nature of civility; It is a sad sight to see a great personage undertake an action passionately and upon great interest; and let him manage it as indiscreetly, let the whole designe be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enough to tell him that he proceeds wisely enough, to be servants of his interest, and promoters of his sin, instruments of his malice and actors of revenge. But which of all his relatives shall dare to tell him of his indiscretion, of his rage and of his folly? he had need be a bold man and a severe person, that shall tell him of his danger; and that he is in a direct progresse towards hell; C and indeed such personages have been so long nourished up in softnes, flattery and effeminacy, that too often themselves are impatient of a monitor, and think the charity and duty of a modest reprehension to be a rudenesse and incivility: that Prince is a wise man that loves to have it otherwise; and certainly it is a strange civility and dutifulnesse in friends and relatives, to suffer him to go to hell uncontrolled, rather then to seem unmannerly towards a great sinner. But certainly this is none of the least infelicities of them who are Lords of the world and masters of great possessions.

D I omit to speak of the habituall intemperance; which is too commonly annexed to Festival and delicious tables, where there is no other measure or restraint upon the appetite, but its fulnesse and satiety, and when it cannot or dare not eat more. Oftentimes it happens, that the intemperance of a poor table is more temperate and hath lesse of luxury in it, then the temperance of a rich. To this are consequent all the evil accidents and effects of fulnesse; pride, lust, wantonnesse, softnesses of disposition and dissolution of manners, huge talking, imperiousnesse, despite and contempt of poor persons, and at the best it is a great temptation for a man to have E in his power whatsoever he can have in his sensual desires: who then shall check his voracity, or calm his revenge, or allay his pride, or mortifie his lust, or humble his spirit? it is like as when a lustful young and tempted person lives perpetually with his amorous and delicious mistris, if he seapes burning, that is inflamed from

SERMON
XVIII.

from within and set on fire from without, it is a greater miracle then the escaping from the flames of the furnace, by the three children of the captivity. And just such a thing is the possession of the world, it furnishes us with abilities to sin and opportunities of ruine, and it makes us to dwell with poisons, and dangers, and enemies.

And although the grace of God is sufficient to great personages, and masters of the world, and that it is possible for a young man to be tied upon a bed of flowers, and fastned by the arms and band of a curtesan and tempted wantonly, and yet to escape the danger and the crime, and to triumph gloriously: (for so Saint Hierome reports of a son of the king of Nicomedia) and riches and a free fortune are designed by God to be a mercy and an opportunity of doing noble things, and excellent charity, and exact justice, and to protect innocents, and to defend oppressed people; yet it is a mercy mixt with much danger; yet it is like the present of a whole vintage to a man in a hettick feaver, he will be shrewdly tempted to drink of it, and if he does, he is inflamed and may chance to die with the kindenesse. Happy are those persons who use the world and abuse it not, who possesse a part of it and love it for no other ends, but for necessities of nature, and conveniences of person, and discharge of all their duty and the offices of religion, and in charity to Christ and all Christs members; but since he that hath all the world cannot command nature to do him one office extraordinary, and enjoyes the best parts but in common with the poorest man in the world, and can use no more of it but according to a limited and a very narrow capacity, and whatsoever he can use or possesse cannot out-weigh the present pressure of a sharp disease, nor can it at all give him content without which there can be nothing of felicity; since a prince in the matter of using the world, differs nothing from his subjects, but in mere accedents and circumstances, and yet these very many trifling differences are not to be obtained but by so much labour and care, so great expence of time and trouble, that the possession will not pay thus much of the price, and after all this, the man may die two hours after he hath made his troublesome and expensive purchase, and is certain not to enjoy it long.

Add to this last, that most men get so little of the world, that it is all together of a trifling and inconsiderable interest, that they who have the most of this world, have the most of that but in title and in supreme rights, and reserved priviledges, the real use descending upon others to more substantial purposes; that the possession of this trifle is mixt with sorrow upon other accidents, and is allayed with fear, and that the greatnesse of mens possessions increase their thirst, and enlarge their wants, by swelling their capacity, and above all, is of so great danger to a mans vertue that

A that a great fortune and a very great vertue are not alwayes observed to grow together; He that observes all this, and much more he may observe, will see that he that gains the whole world hath made no such great bargain of it, although he had it for nothing, but the necessary unavoidable troubles in getting it; but how great a folly it is to buy so great a trouble, so great a vanity, with the losse of our precious souls remains to be considered in the following parts of the text.

B

Sermon XIX.

C

The foolish exchange.

Part II.

D

And lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? And now the question is finally stated, and the dispute is concerning the sum of affairs.

De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa.

E

And therefore when the soul is at stake, not for its temporal, but for its eternal interest, it is not good to be hasty in determining, without taking just measures of the exchange. Solomon had the good things of the world actually in possession, and hee tried them at the touch-stone of prudence and natural value, and found them allayed with vanity and imperfection, and wee that see them weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and tried by the touch-stone of the spirit, finde them not onely light, and unprofitable, but pungent and dolorous, but now we are to consider what it is that men part with, and lose, when with passion and impotency they get the world, and that will present the bargain to be a huge infelicity. And this I observe to be intimated in the word,

[lose]

SERMON
XIX.

[lose] for he gives gold for cloth, or precious stones for bread, A
serves his needs of nature, and loses nothing by it, and the merchant
that found a pearl of great price, and sold all that he had to make
the purchase of it, made a good venture, he was no loser; but here
the case is otherwise, when a man gains the whole world, and his
soul goes in the exchange, hee hath not done like a merchant, but
like a childe, or a prodigal, hee hath given himself away, hee hath
lost all that can distinguish him from a slave, or a miserable per-
son, he loses his soul in the exchange; for the soul of a man, all the
world cannot be a just price, a man may lose it, or throw it away,
but he can never make good exchange, when hee parts with this
jewel, and therefore our Blessed Saviour rarely well expresses it B
by *ζημιω*, which is fully opposed to *κερδο* gain, it is such an ill mar-
ket a man makes, as if he should proclaim his riches, goods, ven-
dible for a garland of thistles decked and trimmed up with the sink-
ing poppy.

But we shall better understand the nature of this bargain, if wee
consider the soul that is exchanged, what it is in it self, in order,
not of nature, but to felicity, and the capacities of joy; secondly
what price the Son of GOD paid for it; and thirdly what it is to
lose it, that is, what miseries and tortures are signified by losing a
mans soul. C

First, if wee consider what the soul is in its own capacity
to happinesse, wee shall finde it to bee an excellency greater then
the Sun; of an Angelical substance, sister to a Cherubin, an image
of the Divinity, and the great argument of that mercy, whereby
God did distinguish us from the lower form of beasts, and trees, and
minerals.

For so it was the Scripture affirms, that *God made man after
his own image*, that is, *secundum illam imaginem & ideam quam con-
cepit ipse*, not according to the likenesse of any of those creatures D
which were preexistent to mans production; not according to any
of those images or ideas whereby God created the heavens, and
the earth; but by a new form, to distinguish him from all other
substances; he made him by a new idea of his own by an uncreated
exemplar; and besides that this was a donation of intelligent facul-
ties, such as we understand to be perfect, and essential, or rather the
essence of God, it was also a designation of him to a glorious im-
mortality and a communication of the rayes and reflections of his
own essential felicities.

But the soul is all that whereby we may be, and without which we
cannot bee happy. E
It is not the eye that sees the beauties of the
heaven, nor the ear that hears the sweetnesse of musick, or the glad
tidings of a prosperous accident, but the soul that perceives all the
relishes of sensual and intellectual perfections, and the more noble
and excellent the soul is, the greater and more savory are its per-
ceptions;

A ceptions: and if a childe beholds the rich Ermine, or the Diamonds of a starry night, or the order of the world, or hears the discourses of an Apostle, because hee makes no reflex acts upon himself, and sees not that he sees; he can have but the pleasure of a fool, or the deliciousnesse of a mule. But although the reflection of its own acts bee a rare instrument of pleasure, or pain respectively, yet the souls excellency is upon the same reason not perceived by us, by which the sapidnesse of pleassants things of nature, are not understood by a childe; even because the soul cannot reflect far enough. For as the Sunne which is the fountain of light and heat, makes violent and direct emission of his rayes from himself, but reflects them no further then to the bottom of a cloud, or the lowest imaginary circle of the middle region, and therefore receives not a duplicate of his own heat; so is the soul of man, it reflects upon its own inferiour actions of particular sense, or general understanding; but because it knows little of its own nature, the manners of volition, the immediate instruments of understanding, the way how it comes to meditate, and cannot discern how a sudden thought arrives, or the solution of a doubt, not depending upon preceding premises, therefore above half its pleasures are abated, and its own worth lesse understood; and possibly it is the better, it is so. If the Elephant knew his strength, or the horse the vigorousnesse of his own spirit, they would be as rebellious against their rulers, as unreasonable men against government: say the Angels themselves, because their light reflected home to their orbs, and they understood all the secrets of their own perfection, they grew vertiginous and fell from the battlements of heaven. But the excellency of a humane soul shall then be truly understood, when the reflection will make no distraction of our faculties, nor enkindle any irregular fires; when we may understand our selves without danger.

D In the mean this consideration is gone high enough when we understand the soul of a man to be so excellently perfect, that we cannot understand how excellently perfect it is: that being the best way of expressing our conceptions of God himself; and therefore I shall not need by distinct discourses to represent that the will of man is the last resort and sanctuary of true pleasure, which in its formality can be nothing else but a conformity of possession, or of being to the will; that the understanding being the chanel and conveyance of the noblest perceptions feeds upon pleasures in all its proportionate acts, and unlesse it be disturbed by intervening sinnes and remembrances, derived hence, keeps a perpetual festival; that the passions are every of them fitted with an object, in which they rest as in their centre; that they have such delight in these their proper objects, that too often they venture a damnation, rather then quit their interest and possession; but yet from these considerations

SERMON
XIX.

derations it would follow that to lose a soul, which is designed to be an immense sea of pleasures, even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be, or be supposed happy; and so much the rather is this understood to be an insupportable calamity, because losing a soul in this sense, is not a meer privation of those felicities of which a soul is naturally designed to be a partaker, but it is an investing it with contrary objects, and crosse effects, and dolorous perceptions: For the will, if it misses its desires, is afflicted, and the understanding when it ceases to be ennobled with excellent things, is made ignorant as a swine, dull as the foot of a rock, and the affections are in the destitution of their perfective actions, made tumultuous, vexed and discomposed, to the height of rage and violence. But this is but the *ἀρχὴ πένθους*, the beginning of those throes which end not but in eternal infelicity.

Secondly, if we consider the price that the Son of God payed for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it, then from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned Philosophy: Not the spoil of rich provinces, not the estimate of kingdoms, not the price of Cleopatra's draught, not any thing that was corruptible or perishing; for that which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. And if we list but to remember, and then consider, that a miserable, lost, and accursed soul, does so infinitely undervalue, and disrelish all the goods and riches that this world dotes on; that he hath no more gust in them, or pleasure, then the fox hath in eating a turf: that if he could be imagined to be the Lord of ten thousand worlds, he would give them all for any shadow of a hope of a possibility of returning to life again; that Dives in hell would have willingly gone on Embassy to his fathers house, that he might have been quit a little from his flames, and on that condition would have given Lazarus the fee-simple of all his temporal possessions, though he had once denied to relieve him with the superfluities of his Table, will soon confess that a moment of time is no good exchange for an eternity of duration; and a light unprofitable possession is not to be put in the ballance against a soul, which is the glory of the creation; a soul, with whom God had made a contract, and contracted excellent relations, it being one of Gods appellatives, that he is the lover of souls.

When God made a soul, it was onely, *faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram*; He spake the word and it was done; but when man had lost this soul, which the spirit of God breathed in him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe, that God made a man from nothing, then that he can return a man from dust and corruption

A corruption: but for this resurrection of the soul, for the reimplacing the Divine image, for the rescuing it from the Devils power, for the reinitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, GOD did a work greater then the creation: Hee was fain to contract Divinity to a span, to send a person to die for us, who of himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts, to make him capable of dying, hee prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom, a person both God and man, an anigma to all nations, and to all sciences: one that ruled over all the Angels, that walked upon the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars, whose eyes were brighter then the Sun, whose voice is louder then thunder, whose understanding is larger then that infinite space which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance, beyond the first orbe of heaven, a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God, this was the onely person that was designed in the eternal decrees of the Divine predestination, to pay the price of a soul, to ransom us from death: lesse then this person could not do it: for although a soul in its essence is *finite*, yet there were *many infinites* which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls: For all which because provision was to be made, nothing lesse then an *infinite excellence* could satisfie for a soul who was lost to *infinite and eternal ages*, who was to be afflicted with *insupportable and indetermined*, that is, *next to infinite pains*, who was to bear the load of an *infinite anger*, from the provocation of an *eternal God*: and yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one half of the abyse, and I think the lesse: for that this person who was GOD eternal, should be lessened in all his apperances, to a span, to the little dimensions of a man, and that he should really become very contemptibly little, although at the same time he was infinitely and unalterably great, that is, *essential, natural and necessary felicity* should turn into an intolerable, violent and immense calamity to his person, that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our redemption, unless he would suffer that horrid misery, which that lost soul should suffer, as it represents the plonies of his goodnesse, who used such rare and admirable instruments in executing the designs of his mercy: so it shows our condition to have been very desperate, and our losse invaluable.

A soul in Gods account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures, of the Son of God, and yet we throw it away for the exchange of sin, that a man naturally is ashamed to own; we lose it for the pleasure, the foolish beastly pleasure of a night: I need not say, we lose our soul to save our lives, for though that was our Blessed Saviours instance of the great unreasonablenesse of men, who by saving their lives lose them, that is, in the great account of Dooms-day, though this (I say) bee extremely unrea-

SERMON
XIX.

sonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain, A
nothing to excuse him with God, but something in the accounts
of timorous men, but to lose our souls with swearing, that unpro-
fitable, dishonourable, and unpleasant vice, to lose our souls with
disobedience, or rebellion, a vice that brings a curse, and danger
all the way in this life: To lose our souls with drunkenness, a
vice which is painful, and sickly in the very acting it, which ha-
stens our damnation, by shortning our lives; are instances fit to be
put in the stories of fools and mad-men; and all vice is a degree
of the same unreasonableness, the most splendid temptation, be-
ing nothing but a pretty well weaved fallacy, a meer trick, a so-
phism, and a cheating, and abusing the understanding; but that B
which I consider here is, that it is an affront and contradiction to
the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul,
in which our interest is so concerned; a soul which hee who made
it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase
to be made, by the exchange of his Son, the eternal Son of GOD.
To which also I adde this additional account, that a soul is so
greatly valued by God, that wee are not to venture the losse of it,
to save all the world. For therefore whosoever should commit a
sin to save Kingdoms from perishing; or if the case could be put, C
that all the good men, and good causes, and good things in this
world, were to be destroyed by Tyranny, and it were in our power
by perjury to save all these, that doing this sinne would be so far
from hallowing the crime, that it were to offer to GOD a sacrifice
of what he most hates, and to serve him with swines blood: and
the rescuing all these from a Tyrant, or a hangman, could not be
pleasing to God upon those termes, because a soul is lost by it, which
is in it self a greater losse and misery, then all the evils in the world
put together can out-balance; and a losse of that thing for which
Christ gave his blood a price: Persecutions and temporal death in
holy men, and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and therefore D
not to be bought off with the losse of a soul, which is a real but
an intolerable calamity: And if God for his own sake would not
have all the world saved by sin, that is by the hazarding of a soul,
we should do well for our own sakes not to lose a soul for trifles,
for things that make us here to be miserable, and even here also to be
ashamed.

3. But it may be some natures, or some understandings care
not for all this, therefore I proceed to the third and most material
consideration, as to us; and I consider what it is to lose a soul?
which Hierocles thus explicates; *ἡ ψυχή ἐστὶν ἀθάνατος, ἀλλὰ τὸ σῶμα ἐστὶν θνητόν. An immortal*
substance can die, not by ceasing to be, but by losing all being well, by be-
coming miserable. And it is remarkable, when our blessed Savi-
our gave us caution, that we should not fear them that can kill the
body

A body onely, but fear him (he sayes not that can kill the soul) But *ὁ δυνατός ἐστι ψυχὴν καὶ σώματα ἀπολλύειν ὡς γὰρ λέγει* him that is able to destroy the body and soul in hell; which word signifieth not death but tortures. For some have chosen death for sanctuary, and fled to it to avoid intolerable shame, to give a period to the sence of a sharp grief, or to cure the earthquakes of fear; and the damned perishing souls shall wish for death, with a desire impatient as their calamity; But this shall be denied them, because death were a deliverance, a mercy, and a pleasure, of which these miserable persons must despair of for ever.

B I shall not need to represent to your considerations those expressions of Scripture, which the Holy Ghost hath set down to represent to our capacities the greatnesse of this perishing; choosing such circumstances of character as were then usuall in the world, and which are dreadful to our understanding as any thing: Hell fire] is the common expression; for the Eastern nations accounted burnings the greatest of their miserable punishments: and burning malefactours was frequent, [*brimstone and fire*] so Saint John Revel. 14. 10. calls the state of punishment, *prepared for the Devil and all his servants*, he adding the circumstance of brimstone, for

C by this time the Devil had taught the world more ingenious pains, and himself was newly escaped out of boiling oil and brimstone, and such bituminous matter; and the Spirit of God knew right well the worst expression was not bad enough, *ἡ ὁραὶ ὁραὶ*, so our blessed Saviour calls it, *the outer darknesse*, that is, not onely an abjection from the beatifick regions, where God, and his Angels, and his Saints dwell for ever, but then there is a positive state of misery expressed by darknesse; *ὁ ὅλος οὐρανός*, as two apostles, Saint Peter and Saint Jude call it, The blacknesse of darknesse for ever. In which although it is certain, that God whose Justice there rules, will inflict

D but just so much as our sins deserve, and not superadde degrees of undeserved misery, as he does to the Saints of glory (for God gives to blessed souls in heaven more, infinitely more then all their good works could possibly deserve, and therefore their glory is infinitely bigger glory then the pains of hell are great pains) yet because Gods Justice in hell rules alone, without the allayes and sweeter abatements of mercy, they shall have pure and unmingled misery; no pleasant thought to refresh their wearinesse, no comfort in another accident to alleviate their pressures, no waters to cool their flames; but because when there is a great calamity upon a man, every such

E man thinks himself the most miserable; and though there are great degrees of pain in hell, yet there are none perceived by him that thinks he suffers the greatest; It follows that every man that loses his soul in this darknesse is miserable beyond all those expressions which the tortures of this world could furnish to the Writers of holy Scripture.

SERMON
XIX.

But I shall choose to represent this consideration in that expression of our blessed Saviour, *Mark* the 9. the 44. verse; which himself took out of the Prophet *Esay*, the 66. verse the 24. *Where the worm dieth not; and the fire is not quenched;* this is the *σοπιλειαι ἐρηωσι* spoken of by *Daniel* the Prophet; for although this expression was a prediction of that horrid calamity and abscission of the Jewish Nation, when God powred out a full vial of his wrath upon the crucifiers of his Son, and that this which was the greatest calamity which ever did or ever shall happen to a Nation, Christ with great reason took to describe the calamity of accursed souls, as being the greatest instance to signify the greatest torment: yet we must observe that the difference of each state makes the same words in the several cases to be of infinite distinction: The worm stuck close to the Jewish Nation, and the fire of Gods wrath flamed out till they were consumed with a great and unheard of destruction; till many millions did die accursedly, and the small remnant became vagabonds, and were reserved, like broken pieces, after a storm, to shew the greatnesse of the storm, and misery of the shipwraek; but then this being translated to signify the state of accursed souls, whose dying is a continual perishing, who cannot cease to be, it must mean an eternity of duration, in proper and naturall significations.

And that we may understand it fully, observe the places. In the 34. *Esa. 8.* The Prophet prophecies of the great destruction of Jerusalem for all her great iniquities. *It is the day of the Lords vengeance, and the year of recompences, for the controversy of Sion, and the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoak thereof shall go up for ever, from generation to generation. It shall lie waste, none shall passe thorough it for ever and ever.* This is the final destruction of the Nation; but this destruction shall have an end, because the Nation shall end, and the anger also shall end in its own period, even then when God shall call the Jews into the common inheritance with the Gentiles, and all the sons of God. And this also was the period of their worme, as it is of their fire, *The fire of the Divine vengeance* upon the Nation; which was not to be extinguished till they were destroyed, as we see it come to passe. And thus also in Saint *Jude*, the Angels who kept not their first state, are said to be reserved by God in everlasting chains under darkness: which word [everlasting] signifies not absolutely to eternity, but to the utmost end of that period, for so it follows [unto the judgement of the great day] that [everlasting] lasts no longer; and in verse the seventh, the word [eternal] is just so used: *The men of Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of [eternal fire],* that is, of a fire, which burned till they were quite destroyed, and the cities and the country

A trey with an irreparable ruine never to be rebuilt, and reinhabited as long as this world continues. The effect of which observations is this;

That these words [*for ever, everlasting, eternal, the never-dying worme, the fire unquenchable,*] being words borrowed by our blessed Saviour and his Apostles from the stile of the old Testament, must have a signification just proportionable to the state in which they signifie; so that as this worme when it signifies a temporal affliction means a worm that never ceases, giving torment, till the body is consumed: So when it is translated to an immortal state, it must signifie as much in that proportion: that *eternall,* that *everlasting,* hath no end at all: because the soul cannot be killed in the natural sense, but is made miserable and perishing for ever; that is, *the worme shall not die so long as the soul shall be unconsumed: the fire shall not be quenched,* till the period of an immortal nature comes, and that this shall be *absolutely for ever* without any restriction; appears unanswerable in this, because the same (*for ever*) that is, for the blessed souls, the same *for ever,* is for the accursed souls; but the blessed souls that die in the Lord, *henceforth shall die no more; death hath no power over them; for death is destroyed, it is swallowed up in victory* (saith Saint Paul) and *there shall be no more death,* saith Saint John, *Revel. 21. 4.* So that because *for ever* hath no end, till the thing or the duration it self have end, in the same sense in which the Saints and Angels give glory to God *for ever,* in the same sense the lost souls shall suffer the evils of their sad inheritance; and since after this death of nature, which is a separation of soul and body, there remains no more death, but this second death, this eternal perishing of miserable accursed souls, whose duration must be eternal; it follows that *the worme of conscience, and the unquenchable fire* of hell have no period at all; but shall last as long as God lasts, or the measures of a proper eternity; that they who provoke God to wrath, by their base, unreasonable, and foolish practises, may know what their portion shall be in the everlasting habitations: and yet suppose that Origens opinion had been true; and that accursed souls should have ease and a period to their tortures after a thousand yeers; I pray let it be considered, whether it be not a great madness to choose the pleasures, or the wealth of a few yeers here, with trouble, with danger, with uncertainty, with labour, with intervals of sicknesse, and for this to endure the flames of hell for a thousand yeers together? The pleasures of the world no man can have for a hundred yeers, and no man hath pleasure a hundred dayes together, but he hath some trouble intervening: or at least a wearinesse and a loathing of the pleasure; and therefore to endure insufferable calamities (suppose it be) for a hundred yeers, without any interruption, without so much comfort as the light

SERMON
XIX.

of a small candle, or a drop of water amounts to in a fever, is a bargain to be made by no man that loves himself, or is not in love with infinite affliction.

If a man were condemned but to lie still, or to lie abed in one posture without turning, for seven yeers together, would he not buy it off with the losse of all his estate? If a man were to be put upon the rack, for every day, three moneths together, (suppose him able to live so long) what would he do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the King to his face, if he were sure to have both his hands burnt off, and to be tormented with torments three yeers together? Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pound a yeer for forty yeers, if he were sure to be tormented in the fire for the next hundred yeers together without intermission? Think then what a thousand yeers signifie: Ten ages, the age of two Empires; but this account I must tell you is infinitely short, though I thus discourse to you, how great fools wicked men are, though this opinion should be true: A goodly comfort surely! that for two or three yeers sottish pleasure, a man shall be infinitely tormented but for a thousand yeers. But then when we cast up the minutes, and yeers, and ages of eternity, the consideration it self is a great hell to those persons, who by their evil lives are consigned to such sad and miserable portions.

A thousand yeers is a long while to be in torment; we finde a fever of 21. dayes to be like an age in length: but when the duration of an intollerable misery is for ever in the height, and for ever beginning, and ten thousand yeers hath spent no part of its terme, but it makes a perpetual efflux, and is like the centre of a circle, which ever transmits lines to the circumference; this is a consideration so sad, that the horror of it and the reflection upon its abode and duration, make a great part of the hell; for hell could not be hell without the despair of accursed souls; for any hope were a refreshment, and a drop of water, which would help to allay those flames, which as they burn intolerably, so they must burn for ever.

And I desire you to consider, that although the Scripture uses the word [fire] to expresse the torments of accursed souls, yet fire can no more equal the pangs of hell, then it can torment a material substance; the pains of perishing souls being as much more afflictive then the smart of fire, as the smart of fire is troublesome beyond the softnesse of Persian carpets, or the sensuality of the Asian Luxury: for the pains of hell; and the perishing or losing of the soul is to suffer the wrath of God, *ὁ θεὸς οὗτος ἡμεῖς πῦρ καταναλάσκει* OUR God is a consuming fire: that is the fire of hell, when God takes away all comfort from us, nothing to support our spirit is left us, when sorrow is our food and tears our drink; when it is eternal night without Sun or star, or lamp, or sleep; when we burn with

A with fire without light, that is, are loaden with sadnesse, without remedy or hope or ease, and that this wrath is to be expressed, and to fall upon us, in spiritual, immaterial, but most accursed, most pungent and dolorous emanations, then we feel what it is to lose a soul.

We may guesse at it by the terrours of a guilty conscience, those *verbera & laniatus*, those secret lashings and whips of the exterminating Angel, those thorns in the soul, when a man is haunted by an evil spirit; those butcheries which the soul of a Tyrant, or a violent, or a vitious person, when he falls into fear or any calamity does feel, are the infinite arguments, that hell which is the consummation of the torment of conscience, just as man-hood is the consummation of infancy, or as glory is the perfection of grace, is an affliction greater then the bulk of heaven and earth; for there it is that God powrs out the treasures of his wrath, and empties the whole magazin of thunder-bolts, and all the armoury of God is imployed, not in the chastising, but in the tormenting of a perishing soul. Lucian brings in Radamanthus telling the poor wandring souls upon the banks of Elysium, *ἡρώων δὲ τῶν ὑποβλήτων ἐν ἑκάστῳ αἰὶν ἔστι τι πόνος καὶ ἔργον καὶ ἔστι τι κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν ἢ κατὰ τὴν ἀνομίαν* for every wickednesse that any man commits in his life when he comes to hell he hath stamped upon his soul an invisable brand and mark of torment; and this begins here, and is not cancelled by death, but there is enlarged by the greatnesse of infinite and the aboads of eternity. How great these torments of conscience are here, let any man imagine that can but understand what despair means; despair upon just reason: let it be what it will, no misery can be greater then despair: and because I hope none here have felt those horrours of an evil conscience, which are consignations to eternity, you may please to learn it by your own reason, or else by the sad instances of story. It is reported of Petrus Ilosuanus, A Polonian School-master, that having read some ill managed discourses of absolute decrees and divine reprobation, began to be Phantastick and melancholy, and apprehensive, that he might be one of those many whom God had decreed for Hell from all eternity; from possible to probable, from probable, to certain, the temptation soon carried him, and when he once began to believe himself to be a person inevitably perishing, it is not possible to understand perfectly, what infinite fears, and agonies, and despairs, what tremblings, what horrors, what confusion and amazement the poor man felt within him, to consider that he was to be tormented extremely without remedy even to eternall ages; This in a short continuance grew insufferable, and prevailed upon him so far, that he hanged himself, and left this account of it to this purpose in writing in his study; I am gone from hence to the flames of hell, and have forced my way thither, being impatient to try what those great torments are

SERMON
XIX.

are which here I have feared with an insupportable amazement: this instance may suffice to shew what it is to lose a soul. But I will take off from this sad discourse; onely I shall crave your attention; that word of exhortation.

That you take care, lest for the purchase of a little, trifling, inconsiderable portion of the world you come into this place and state of torments. Although Homer was pleased to complement the beauty of Helena to such a height, as to say it was a sufficient price for all the evils which the Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years.

Yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus, that during the ten years siege of Troy, Helena, for whom the Greeks fought, was in Egypt, not in the city, because it was unimaginable but that the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather then for the sake of such a trifle, have endured so great calamities. we are more foolish then the Trojans, if we retain our Helena, any one beloved lust, any painted Devil, any sugar'd temptation with, (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such invaluable losses. And certainly its a strange stupidity of spirit, that can sleep in the midst of such thunder, when God speaks from heaven with his lowdest voice, and draws aside his curtain, and shows his arsenal and his armory, full of arrows steeld with wrath, headed and pointed, and hardned with vengeance, still to snatch at those arrows, if they came but in the retinue of a rich fortune or a vain Mistress, if they wait but upon pleasure or profit, or in the reare of an ambitious designe.

But let not us have such a hardiness against the threats and representations of the divine vengeance, as to take the little imposts and revenues of the world, and stand in defiance against God and the fears of hell, unless we have a charm that we can be invisible to the judge of heaven and earth, and are impregnable against, or are sure we shall be insensible of the miseries of a perishing soul.

There is a sort of men, who because they will be vicious and Atheistical in their lives, have no way to go on with any plaissance and without huge disturbances, but by being also Atheistical in their opinions, and to believe that the story of hell is but a bug-bear to affright children and fools, easie believing people to make them soft and apt for government and designs of Princes; and this is an opinion that befriends none but impure and vicious persons; others there are that believe God to be all mercy, that he forgets his justice, believing that none shall perish with so sad a ruine, if they do but at their death bed ask God forgiveness and say they are sorry; but ye continue their impiety till their house be ready

A to fall; being like the Circassians whose Gentlemen enter not into the Church till they be threescore years old; that is, in effect till by their age they cannot any longer use rapine: till then they bear service at their windows: dividing unequally their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to robbery, and their old age to a repentance without restitution.

Our youth, and our man-hood and old age are all of them due to God; and justice and mercy are to him equally essential, and as this life is a time of the possibilities of mercy, so to them that neglect it, the next world shall be a state of pure and unmingled justice.

B Remember the fatal and decreetory sentence which God hath passed upon all man-kinde [*It is appointed to all men once to die, and after death comes judgement*] and if any of us were certain to die next morning, with what earnestness should we pray, with what hatred should we remember our sins, with what scorn should we look upon the licentious pleasures of the world, then nothing could be welcome unto us but a prayer book, no company but a Comforter and a Guide of souls, no employment but repentance, no passions but in order to religion, no kindeness for a lust that hath undone us; and if any of you have been arrested with alarms of death, or been in hearty fear of its approach, remember what

C thoughts and designs then possessed you, how precious a soul was then in your account, and what then you would give that you had despised the world, and done your duty to God and man, and lived a holy life. It will come to that again, and we shall be in that condition in which we shall perfectly understand, that all the things and pleasures of the world are vain and unprofitable, and like smoke, and that he onely is a wise man who secures the interest of his soul, though it be with the loss of all this world and his own life into the bargain. When we are to depart this life to go to strange company

D and stranger places, and to an unknown condition, then a holy conscience will be the best security, the best possession; it will be a horror that every friend we meet shall with triumph upbraid to us the foolishness of our folly. *Is this is the goodly change you have made, you had your good things in your life time; and here like you the portion that is reserved to you for ever?*

The old Rabbins, those Poets of religion, report of Moses, that when the courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the childe Moses in the chamber of Pharaoh's daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand, and a bowl of fire in the other; and that the childe snatched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so singed and parched his tongue, that he stammered ever after: and certainly it is infinitely more childish in us for the glittering of the small glowworms and the charcoal of worldly possessions, to swallow the flames of hell greedily, in our choice: such a bit will produce a worse stammering then Moses had: for so the accursed and lost souls have their ugly and horrid dialect, they

SERMON
XIX.

roare and blaspheme, blaspheme and roare for ever. And suppose God should now at this instant send the great Archangel with his trumpet to summon all the world to judgement, would not all this seem a notorious visible truth, a truth, which you will then wonder that every man did not lay to his heart and preserve therein actual, pious and effective consideration? let the trumpet of God perpetually sound in your years, *fugite mortui, & venite ad iudicium*, place your selves by meditation every day upon your death-bed, and remember what thoughts shall then possesse you; and let such thoughts dwell in your understanding for ever, and be the parent of all your resolutions and actions. The Doctors of the Jews report, that when Absalom hanged among the oaks, by the hair of the head; he seemed to see under him hell gaping wide, ready to receive him; and he durst not cut off the hair that intangled him, for fear he should fall into the horrid lake whose portion is flames and torment; but chose to protract his miserable life a few minuts in that pain of posture, and to abide the stroke of his pursuing enemies: His condition was sad when his arts of remedy were so vain. *Τὸ δὲ βέλῳ ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ πυλῶνι ἐν ᾧ ἔστιν ὁ πυλῶν* Soph. A condemned man hath but small comfort to stay the singing of a long psalm, it is the case of every vicious person.

Hell is wide open to every impenitent persevering sinner, to every unpurged person.

Nō est atque dies patet atri Janna, Ditis.

And although God hath lighted his candle, and the lantern of his word and clearest revelations is held out to us, that we can see hell in its worst colours, and most horrid representations, yet we run greedily after bables into that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then onely we begin to consider, when all consideration is fruitlesse.

He therefore is a huge fool that heaps up riches, that greedily pursues the world; and at the same time, (for so it must be) *heaps up wrath to himself against the day of wrath*; when sicknesse and death arrests him, then they appear unprofitable and himself extremely miserable: and if you would know how great that misery is, you may take account of it by those fearful words and killing Rhetorick of Scripture, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and who can dwell with the everlasting burning?* That is, No patience can abide there one hour where they must dwell for ever.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and who can dwell with the everlasting burning? That is, No patience can abide there one hour where they must dwell for ever.

Ser-



Sermon. XX.

OF CHRISTIAN PRVDENCE.

Matthew 10. *latter part of Ver. 16.*

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmlesse as doves.



When our B. Saviour entailed a law and a condition of sufferings, and promised a state of persecution to his servants, and withall had charmed them with the bands and unactive chains of so many passive graces, that they should not be able to stir against the violence of Tyrants, or abate the edge of axes, by any instrument, but their own blood; being sent forth as sheep among wolves, innocent and silent, harmlesse, and defencelesse, certainly exposed to sorrow, and uncertainly guarded in their persons; their condition seemed nothing else, but a designation to slaughter; and when they were drawn into the folds of the Church, they were betrayed into the hands of evil men, infinitely and unavoidably; and when an Apostle invited a Proselyte to come to Christ, it was in effect a snare laid for his life, and hee could neither conceal his religion, nor hide his person, nor avoid a captious question, nor deny his accusation, nor elude the bloody

SERMON
XX.

arts of Orators, and Informers, nor break prisons, nor any thing but die. If the case stood just thus, it was well eternity stood at the outer doors of our life, ready to receive such harmlesse people; but surely there could be no art in the designe, no pitying of humane weaknesse, no complying with the condition of man, no allowances made for customs and prejudices of the world, no inviting men by the things of men, no turning nature into religion; but it was all the way a direct violence, and an open prostitution of our lives; and a throwing away our fortune into a sea of rashnesse and credulity. But therefore God ordered the affairs and necessities of religion, in other wayes, and to other purposes. Although GOD bound our hands behinde us, yet he did not tie our understandings up: although we might not use our swords, yet we might use our reason: wee were not suffered to bee violent, but we might avoid violence by all the arts of prudence and innocence; if wee did take heed of sin, we might also take heed of men: and because in all contentions between *wit* and *violence*, *prudence* and *rudenesse*, *learning* and *the sword*, the strong hand took it first, and the strong head possessed it last: the strong man first governed, and the witty man succeeded him, and lasted longer; it came to passe that the wisdom of the Father hath so ordered it, that all his Disciples should overcome the power of the Roman legions by a wise religion; and *prudence* and *innocence* should become the mightiest guards; and the Christian although exposed to persecution, yet is so secured that he shall never need to die. But when the circumstances are so ordered that his reason is convinced, that then it is fit he should; fit (I say) in order to Gods purposes and his own.

For hee that is *innocent* is safe against all the rods and the axes of all the Consuls of the world, if they rule by justice; and he that is *prudent* will also escape from many rudenesse and irregular violences, that can come by injustice: and no wit of man, no government, no armies can do more; for Caesar perished in the midst of all his legions, and all his honours, and against *chance* and *irregularities* there is no provision lesse then infinite, that can give security; and although *prudence* alone cannot do this; yet *innocence* gives the greatest title to that providence, which onely can if he pleases, and will if it be fitting. Here then are the two arms defensive of a Christian: *Prudence* against the evils of men, *Innocence* against the evils of Devils: and all that relates to his kingdom.

Prudence fences against persecution, and the evil snares; against the opportunities and occasions of sin, it prevents surprizes, it fortifies all his proper weaknesse, it improves our talents, it does advantage to the kingdom of Christ, and the interests of the Gospel, it secures our condition, and instructs ourselves in all the wayes and just passages to felicity, it makes us to live profitably, and die wisely; and without it, simplicity would turn to sillinesse, zeal into

A. into passion, passion into fury, religion into scandal, conversation into a snare, civilities into temptation, civilities into danger, and an imprudent person falls into a condition of harmlesse, rich and unwary fools, or rather of birds, sheep, and bevers, who are hunted and persecuted for the spoils of their fleece, or their flesh, their skins, or their entrails, and have not the foresight to avoid a snare, but by their fear and undefending follies are driven thither where they die infallibly. *ο και οτι πολλοις εις σφοδρα διηλυσαι.* Every good man is incircled with many enemies, and dangers: and his vertue shall be rifled, and the decency of his soul and spirit shall be discomposed and turned into a heap of inarticulate and disorderly fancies, unlesse by the methods and guards of prudence it be manna-
B. ged and secured.

But in order to the following discourse and its method, we are first to consider whether this bee, or indeed can bee a commandment; or what is it? For can all men that give up their names in Baptisme, be enjoined to be wise and prudent? It is as if God would command us to be eloquent, or witty men, fine speakers, or strait-bodied, or excellent schollers, or rich men: If he please to make us so, we are so; and prudence is a gift of God, a blessing of
C. an excellent nature, and of great leisure, and a wise opportunity, and a severe education, and a great experience, and a strict observation, and good company; all which being either wholly, or in part out of our power, may be expected as free gifts, but cannot be imposed as commandments.

To this I answer, That Christian prudence is in very many instances a direct duty; in some an instance and advice, in order to degrees and advantages: where it is a duty, it is put into every mans power; where it is an advice, it is onely expected according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not: and even
D. here, although the events of prudence are out of our power, yet the endeavours and the observation, the diligence and caution, the moral part of it, and the plain conduct of our necessary duty (which are portions of this grace) are such things which GOD will demand in proportion to the talent which he hath intrusted into our Banks. There are indeed some Christians very unwary and unwise in the conduct of their religion, and they cannot all help it, at least not in all degrees; but yet they may be taught to *do prudent things*, though *not to bee prudent persons*: if they have not the prudence of advice, and conduct, yet they may have the prudence of obedience and of disciples: and the event is this; without prudence
E. their vertue is unsafe, and their persons defenselesse, and their interest is unguarded; for prudence is a hand-maid waiting at the production, and birth of vertue: It is a nurse to it in its infancy, its patron in assaults: its guide in temptations, its security in all portions of chance and contingency: And he that is imprudent, if hee
Y have

SERMON
XX.

have many accidents and varieties, it is in great danger of being *none at all*, or if he be, at the best he is but a *weak and unprofitable servant*, uselesse to his neighbour, vain in himself, and as to God, *the least in the kingdom*: his vertue is contingent, and by chance, not proportioned to the reward of wisdom, and the election of a wise religion.

Προνοία ἔστιν ἀνθρώποις ἐν
καὶ τῷ λαῷ ἀμείνον ἔστιν σοφία.

No purchase, no wealth, no advantage is great enough to be compared to a wise soul, and a prudent spirit; and he that wants it, hath a lesse vertue, and a defencelesse minde, and will suffer a mighty hazard in the interest of eternity. Its parts and proper acts consist in the following particulars.

I. It is the duty of Christian Prudence to chuse the end of a Christian, that which is perfective of a man, satisfactory to reason, the rest of a Christian, and the beatification of his spirit; and that is, to chuse, and desire, and propound to himself heaven, and the fruition of God, as the end of all his acts and arts, his designs and purposes. For in the nature of things that is most eligible, and most to be pursued, which is most perfective of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the satisfaction, and proper rest of our most reasonable appetites. Now the things of this world are difficult and uneasy, full of thornes, and empty of pleasures, they fill a diseased faculty, or an abused sense, but are an infinite dissatisfaction to reason, and the appetites of the soul: they are short and transient, and they never abide, unlesse sorrow like a chain be bound about their leg, and then they never stir, till the grace of God and religion breaks it, or else that the rust of time eats the chain in pieces: they are dangerous and doubtfull, few and difficult, sordid and particular, not onely not communicable to a multitude, but not diffusive upon the whole man; there being no one pleasure or object in this world, that delights all the parts of man: and after all this, they are originally from earth, and from the creatures, onely that they oftentimes contract alliances with hell and the grave, with shame and sorrow; and all these put together make no great amability, or proportion to a wise mans choice: But on the other side, the things of GOD are the noblest satisfactions to those desires, which ought to be cherished and swelled up to infinite; their deliciousness is vast and full of relish, and their very appendant thorns are to be chosen, for they are gilded, they are safe and medicinal, they heal the wound they make, and bring forth fruit of a blessed and a holy life: The things of God and of religion are easie and sweet, they bear entertainments in their hand, and reward at their back, their good is certain and perpetual, and they make us cheerfull

A full to day, and pleasant to morrow; and spiritual songs end not in a sigh and a groan; neither like unwholsome physick do they let loose a present humour, and introduce an habitual indisposition: But they bring us to the felicity of God, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever; they do not give a private and particular delight, but their benefit is publike, like the incense of the altar, it sends up a sweet smell to heaven, and makes atonement for the religious man that kindled it, and delights all the standers by, and makes the very air wholsome; there is no blessed soul goes to heaven, but he makes a general joy in all the mansions where the Saints do dwell, and in all the chappels where the Angels sing: and the joyes of religion are not univocal, but productive of rare and accidental, and praternatural pleasures; for the musick of holy hymnes delights the ear, and refreshes the spirit, and makes the very bones of the Saint to rejoyce: and charity, or the giving alms to the poor, does not onely ease the poverty of the receiver, but makes the giver rich, and heals his sicknesse, and *delivers from death*; and temperance though it be in the matter of meat, and drink, and pleasures, yet hath an effect upon the understanding, and makes the reason sober, and his will orderly, and his affections regular, and does things beside, and beyond their natural and proper efficacy; for all the parts of our duty are warred with the showers of blessing, and bring forth fruit according to the influence of heaven, and beyond the capacities of nature.

And now let the voluptuous person go and try whether putting his wanton hand to the bosome of his Mistresse will get half such honour as Scavola put upon his head, when he put his hand into the fire. Let him see whether a drunken meeting will cure a fever, or make him wise (A hearty and a persevering prayer will.) Let him tell me, if spending great summes of money upon his lusts will make him sleep soundly, or be rich: Charity will? Alms will increase his fortune, and a good conscience shall charme all his cares and sorrows into a most delicious slumber; well may a full goblet wet the drunkards tongue, and then the heat rising from the stomack will dry the sponge, and heat it into the scorplings and little Images of hell: and the follies of a wanton bed will turn the itch into a smart, and empty the reins of all their lustfull powers; but can they do honour, or satisfaction in any thing that must last, and that ought to be provided for? No: All the things of this world are little, and trifling, and limited, and particular, and sometimes necessary because men are miserable, wanting and imperfect, but they never do any thing toward perfection, but their pleasure dies like the time in which it danced a while, and when the minute is gone, so is the pleasure too, and leaves no footstep but the impression of a sigh, and dwells no where but in the same house where you shall finde *yesterday*, that is in forgetfulness, and

SERMON
XX.

annihilation, unlesse its onely childe, sorrow, shall marry, and breed more of its kinde, and so continue its memory and name to eternall ages. It is therefore the most necessary part of prudence to choose well in the main stake; and the dispute is not much; for if eternal things be better then temporal, the soul more noble then the body, vertue more honourable then the basest vices, a lasting joy to be chosen before an eternall sorrow, much to be preferred before little, certainty before danger, publike good things, before private evils, eternity before moments, then let us set down in religion, and make heaven to be our end, God to be our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Holy Ghost the earnest of our inheritance, vertue to be our employment, and then we shall never enter into the portion of fools and accursed ill-choosing spirits. Nazianzen said well, *Malim prudentiæ guttam quam secundioris fortune pelagum*: One drop of prudence is more usetull, then an ocean of a smooth fortune; for prudence is a rare instrument towards heaven; and a great fortune is made oftentimes the high-way to hell and destruction. However, thus farre, prudence is our duty; every man can be so wise, and is bound to it, to choose heaven and a cohabitation with God, before the possessions and transient vanities of the world.

2. It is a duty of Christian prudence to pursue this great end, with apt means and instruments in proportion to that end. No wise man will sail to Ormus in a cock-boat, or use a childe for his interpreter; and that Generall is a Cyclops without an eye, who chooses the sickest men to man his Towns, and the weakest to fight his battels. It cannot be a vigorous prosecution, unlesse the means have an efficacie or worth commensurate to all the difficulty, and something of the excellency of that end which is designed. And indeed men use not to be so weak in acquiring the possessions of their temporals; But in matters of religion they think any thing effective enough to secure the greatest interest; as if all the fields of heaven, and the regions of the Kingdom were waste ground, and wanted a Colony of planters; and that God invited men to heaven upon any terms, that he might rejoyce in the multitude of subjects. For certain it is, men do more to get a little money, then for all the glories of heaven: Men rise up early and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulnesse, to become richer then their neighbours; and are amazed at every losse, and impatient of an evil accident, and feel a direct storm of passion, if they suffer in their interest: But in order to heaven, they are cold in their religion, indevout in their prayers, incurious in their walking, unwatchfull in their circumstances, indifferent in the use of their opportunities, infrequent in their discourings of it, not inquisitive of the way, and yet think they shall surely go to heaven: But a prudent man knows that by the greatnesse of the purchase, he is to make

A make an estimate of the value and the price: When we ask of God any great thing; As *wisdom, delivery from sickness, his holy Spirit, the forgiveness of sins, the grace of chastity, restitution to his favour, or the like,* do we hope to obtain them without a high opinion of the things we ask? and if we value them highly, must we not desire them earnestly? and if we desire them earnestly, must we not pray for them fervently? and whatsoever we ask for fervently, must not we beg for frequently? and then because prayer is but one hand toward the reaching a blessing, and God requires our cooperation and endeavour; and we must work with both hands: are we not convinced that our prayers are either faint, or a designe of laziness, when we either ask coldly, or else pray loudly, hoping to receive the graces we need without labour? A prudent person that knows to value the best object of his desires, will also know that he must observe the degrees of labour, according to the excellency of the reward: Prayer must be *effectual, fervent, frequent, continually, holy, passionate,* that must get a grace, or secure a blessing: The love that we must have to God must be such as to *keep his commandments,* and to make us willing to part with all our estate, and all our honour, and our life for the testimony of a holy conscience. Our charity to our neighbours must be expressive in a language of a real friendship, aptness to forgive, readiness to forbear, in pitying infirmities, in relieving necessities, in giving our goods and our lives, and quitting our priviledges to save his soul, to secure and support his virtue. Our repentance must be full of sorrows and care, of diligence and hatred against sin, it must drive out all, and leave no affections towards it; it must be constant and persevering, fearfull of relapse, and watchfull of all accidents: Our temperance must sometimes turn into abstinence, and most commonly be severe, and ever without reproof: He that striveth for masteries is temperate (saith Saint Paul) in all things; he that does all this, may with some pretence and reason say, he intends to go to heaven: But they that will not deny a lust, nor refrain an appetite, they that will be drunk when their friends do merrily constrain them, or love a cheap religion, and a gentle and lame prayer, short and soft, quickly said, and soon passed over, seldom returning, and but little observed, How is it possible that they should think themselves persons disposed to receive such glorious crowns and scepters, such excellent conditions, which they have not faith enough to beleieve, nor attention enough to consider, and no man can have wit enough to understand. But so might an Arcadian shepherd look from the rocks, or thorow the cliffs of the valley where his sheep graze, and wonder that the messenger staves so long from coming to him to be crowned King of all the Greek Islands, or to be adopted heir to the Macedonian Monarchy. It is an infinite love of God, that we have

SERMON
XX.

heaven upon conditions; which we can perform with greatest diligence; But truly the lives of men are generally such, that they do things in order to heaven, things (I say) so few, so trifling, so unworthy, that they are not proportionable to the reward of a crown of oak, or a yellow ribband, the slender reward with which the Romans payed their souldiers for their extraordinary valour. True it is, that heaven is not in a just sense of a commutation, *a reward, but a gift, and an infinite favour*: but yet it is not reached forth but to persons disposed by the conditions of God; which conditions when we pursue in kinde, let us be very carefull we do not fail of *the mighty price of our high calling*, for want of degrees and just measures, the measures of zeal and a mighty love.

3. It is an office of prudence. to serve God so that we may at the same time preserve our lives and our estates, our interest and reputation for our selves, and our relatives, so farre as they can consist together. Saint Paul in the beginning of Christianity was careful to instruct the forwardnesse and zeal of the new Christians into good husbandry, and to catechize the men into good trades, and the women into usefull imployments, that they might not be unprofitable. For Christian religion carrying us to heaven, does it by the way of a man, and by the body it serves the soul, as by the soul it serves God; and therefore it endeavours to secure the body and its interest, that it may continue the opportunities of a crown, and prolong the stage in which we are to run *for the mighty price of our salvation*: and this is that part of prudence, which is the defensive and guards of a Christian in the time of persecution; and it hath in it much of duty. He that through an indiscreet zeal casts himself into a needlesse danger, hath betrayed his life to tyranny, and tempts the sin of an enemy, he loses to God the service of many yeers, and cuts off himself from a fair opportunity of working his salvation (in the main parts of which we shall finde a long life, and very many yeers of reason to be little enough) he betrayes the interest of his relatives, (which he is bound to preserve) he disables himself of making *provision for them of his own house* and he that fails in this duty by his own fault is worse then an infidel, and denies the faith, by such unseasonably dying, or being undone, which by that testimony he did intend gloriously to confesse; he serves the end of ambition and popular services, but not the sober ends of religion, he discourages the weak, and weakens the hands of the strong, and by upbraiding their warinesse, tempts them to turn it into rashnesse or despair; he affrights strangers from entring into religion, while by such imprudence, he shall represent it to be impossible at the same time to be wise and to be religious; it turns all the whole religion into a forwardnesse of dying or beggery, leaving

A no space for the parts and offices of a holy life, which in times of persecution are infinitely necessary, for the advantages of the institution. But God hath provided better things for his servants; *Quem fata cogunt, ille cum venia est miser*, He whom God by an inevitable necessity calls to sufferance, he hath leave to be undone, and that ruine of his estate or losse of his life shall secure first a providence, then a crown.

*At si quis ultro se malis offert volens,
Seque ipse torquet, perdere est dignus bona
Quis nescit nisi.*

B

But he that invites the cruelty of a Tyrant by his own follies, or the indiscretions of an insignificant and impertinent zeal, suffers as a wilful person, and enters into the portion and reward of fools. And this is the precept of our Blessed Saviour, next after my text: *Beware of men*: use your prudence to the purposes of avoiding their snare.

C

ἄνθρωπος ὁ βλαπτόντων πάντων ἐστίν· ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ βλαπτόντων πάντων ἐστίν· Man is the most harmful of all the wilde beasts: ye are sent as sheep among wolves, be therefore wise as serpents; when you can avoid it, suffer not men to ride over your heads, or trample you under foot; that is the wisdom of Serpents; and so must we; that is by all just compliances, and toleration of all indifferent changes in which a duty is not destroyed, and in which we were not active, so to preserve our selves that we might be permitted to live, and serve God, and to do advantages to religion; so purchasing time to do good in, by bending in all those flexures of fortune, and condition, which we cannot help, and which we do not set forward, and which we never did procure: and this is the direct meaning of Saint Paul: see then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time because the dayes are evil; that is, we are fallen into times that are troublesome,

Eph. 5. 16.

D

dangerous, persecuting and afflictive, purchase as much respite as you can: Buy or redeem the time by all honest arts, by humility, by fair carriage and sweetneses of society, by civility, and a peaceful conversation, by good words, and all honest offices, by praying for your persecutors, by patient sufferance of what is unavoidable: And when the Tyrant draws you forth from all these guards and retirements, and offers violence to your duty, or tempts you to do a dishonest act, or to omit an act of obligation, then come forth into the Theater and lay your necks down to the hangmans axe, and fear not to die the most shameful death of the crosse or the gallows: for so have I known Angels ascending and descending upon those ladders: and the Lord of glory suffered shame and purchased honour upon the crosse. Thus we are to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time: for so Saint Paul renews that permission, or commandment: Give them no just cause of offence;

Col. 4. 5.

E

with

SERMON
XX.

with all humility and as occasion is offered represent their duty, and invite them sweetly to felicities and vertue, but do not in ruder language upbraid and reproach their baseness: and when they are incorrigible, let them alone, lest like cats they run mad with the smell of delicious ointments; And therefore Pothinus Bishop of Lyons being asked by the unbaptized President, *who was the God of the Christians?* answered, *ὁ ἄλλος ὁ γνόμενος*; If you be disposed with real and hearty desires of learning, what you ask you shall quickly know; But if your purposes be indirect, I shall not preach to you, to my hurt and your no advantage. Thus the wisdom of the primitive Christians was carefull not to prophane the temples of the heathen, not to revile their false Gods, and when they were in duty to represent the follies of their religion, they chose to do it, from their own writings, and as relators of their own records they fled from the fury of a persecution, they hid themselves in caves, and wandred about in disguises, and preached in private, and celebrated their synaxes, and communions in grots and retirements; and made it appear to all the world, they were peaceable, and obedient, charitable, and patient, and at this price bought their time.

*καὶ οὕτως ἄνθρωποι
μὴ γινώσκοντες ὅτι ἐκεῖ ὁ θεὸς ἔστιν*

As knowing that even in this sense, *time was very precious*, and the opportunity of giving glory to God by the offices of an excellent religion, was not too deare a purchase at that rate. But then when the wolves had entred into the folds and seized upon a lamb, the rest fled, and used all the innocent arts of concealment. *Saint Athanasius* being overtaken by his persecutors, but not known, and asked whether he saw *Athanasius* passing that way; pointed out forward with his finger, *non longe abest Athanasius*; the man is not far off; a swift footman will easily overtake him. And Saint Paul divided the councill of his Judges, and made the Pharisees his parties by a witty insinuation of his own belief of the resurrection, which was not the main question, but an incident to the matter of his accusation. And when Plinius secundus in the face of a Tyrant-court was pressed so invidiously to give his opinion concerning a good man in banishment, and under the disadvantage of an unjust sentence, he diverted the snare of Marcus Regulus, by referring his answer to a competent judicatory according to the laws: being pressed again, by offering a direct answer upon a just condition, which he knew, they would not accept: and the third time, by turning the envy upon the impertinent and malicious Orator, that he won great honour, the honour of a severe honesty, and a witty man, and a prudent person.

A person. The thing I have noted, because it is a good pattern to re-
 present the arts of honest evasion, and religious, prudent honesty,
 which any good man may transcribe and turn into his own instances,
 if any equal case should occur. For in this case the rule is easie; If we are commanded to
 be wise and redeem our time, that we serve God and religion,
 we must not use unlawful arts which set us back in the accounts
 of our time; no lying Subterfuges; no betraying of truth; no
 treachery to a good man; no insinuating of a brother, no secret
 renouncing of any part or proposition of our religion; no de-
 laying to confesse the article when we are called to it. For
 when the primitive Christians had got a trick to give money
 for certificates, that they had sacrificed to Idols; although in-
 deed they did not do it, but had corrupted the officers and
 ministers of state, they dishonoured their religion, and were
 marked with the appellative of *libellatici*, *Libellers*; and were
 excommunicate and cast off from the society of Christians and
 the hopes of Heaven, till they had returned to God by a
 severe repentance; *optandum est ut quod libenter facis diu fa-
 cere possis*. It is good to have time long to do that which we
 ought to doe: but to pretend that, which we dare not doe,
 and to say we have, when we have not, if we know we
 ought not, is to dishonour the cause and the person too: it is
 expressly against *confession of Christ*, of which Saint Paul saith,
by the mouth confession is made unto salvation. And our Blessed
 Saviour, *he that confesseth me before men: I will confesse him be-
 fore my Heavenly Father*; And if here he refuseth to own me,
 I will not own him hereafter. It is also expressly against Chri-
 stian fortitude and noblesse: and against the simplicity and
 sincerity of our religion, and it turnes prudence into craft,
 and brings the Devil to wait in the temple, and to minister
 to God: and it is a lesser Kinde of *apostasy*: and it is well
 that the man is tempted no further: for if the persecutors could
 not be corrupted with money, it is ods but the complying man
 would, and though he would with the money hide his shame,
 yet he will not with the losse of all his estate redeeme his
 religion *καταλείψας δὲ ἕχεται πῦρ ἐμαυτοῦ καὶ βίον αὐτῷ κακόν*: some men will
 lose their lives rather then a faire estate: and doe not al-
 most all the armies of the world (I mean) those that fight
 in the justest causes, pretend to fight and die for their lands
 and liberties: and there are too many also that will diet twice,
 rather then be beggers once: although we all know that the
 second death is intolerable. Christian prudence forbids us to pro-
 voke a danger: and they were fond persons that run to perse-
 cution, and when the Proconsul sate on the life and death, and
 made strict inquisition after Christians, went and offered them-
 selves

9
SERMON
XX.

themselves to die; and he was a fool, that being in Portugal run to the Priest as he elevated the host; and overthrew the mysteries and openly defied the rites of that religion: God when he sends a persecution will pick out such persons whom he will have to die, and whom he will consign to banishment, and whom to poverty: In the mean time let us do our duty when we can, and as long as we can, and with as much strictness as we can, walking as the Apostles of Christ in not wavering in the least tittle; and then if we can be safe with the art of civil, innocent, inoffensive compliance, let us bless God for his permissions made to us, and his assurances in the using them. But if either we turn our zeal into the ambition of death; and the follies of an unnecessary beggary; or on the other side turn our prudence into craft and covetousness; to the first, (I say) that God hath no pleasure in fools; to the later, if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul: your loss is infinitely and intolerable.

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Sermon XXI.

Of Christian Prudence.

Part II.

4. **I**T is the office of Christian Prudence, so to order the affairs of our life, as that in all the offices of our souls and conversation, we do honour, and reputation, to the religion we profess. For the follies and vices of the Professors give great advantages to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and does aliene the hearts, and hinder the compliance of those undetermined persons, who are apt to be perswaded, if their understandings be not prejudiced.

But as our necessary duty is bound upon us by one ligament more in order to the honour of the cause of God; so it particularly binds us to many circumstances, adjuncts, and parts of duty, which have no other commandment, but the law of prudence. There are some sects of Christians which have some one constant indisposition, which as a Character divides them from all others, and makes them reproved on all hands: some are so suspicious and ill-natured, that if a person of a facile nature, and gentle disposition fall into their hands, he is presently sowed and made morose, unpleasant and uneasy in his conversation: Others there are that do things so like to what themselves condemn, that they are forced to take sanctuary and labour in the mine of insignificant distinctions, to make themselves believe they are innocent: and in the mean time they offend all men else, and open the mouths of their adversaries to speak reproachful things; true, or false: (as it happens) And it requires a great wit to understand all the distinctions and devices thought of, for legitimating the worshipping of images: And those people

SERMON
XXI.

people that are liberal in their excommunications make men think they have reason to say their Judges are proud, or self-willed, or covetous, or ill-natured people. These that are the faults of Governours, and continued, are quickly derived upon the sect, and cause a disreputation to the whole society and institution. And who can think that Congregation to be a true branch of the Christian, who makes it their profession to kill men to save their souls against their will, and against their understanding? who calling themselves Disciples of so meek a Master, do live like Bears upon prey, and spoil, and blood? It is a huge dishonour to the sincerity of a mans purposes to be too busie in fingring money in the matters of religion: and they that are zealous for their rights and tame in their devotion, furious against sacrilege, and a companion of drunkards; implacable against breakers of a Canon, and carelesse and patient enough with them that break the fifth or sixth Cominandments of the Decalogue, tell all the world their private sence is to preserve their own interest with scruple and curiosity, and leave God to take care for his.

Thus Christ reprov'd the Pharisees, for straining at a gnat and swallowing a Camel; the very representation of the manner and matter of fact discovers the vice by reprovng the folly of it. They that are factious to get a rich proselyte, and think the poor not worth saving, dishonour their zeal, and teach men to call it covetousnesse, and though there may bee a reason of prudence to desire one more then the other, because of a bigger efficacy, the example of the one may have more then the other; yet it will quickly bee discovered if it be done by secular designe: and the Scripture that did not allow the preferring of a gay man before a poor Saint in the matter of place, will not be pleased that in the matter of souls, which are all equal, there should be a faction and designe, and an acceptance of persons. Never let sins pollute our Religion with arts of the world, nor offer to support the Ark with unhallowed hands; nor mingle false propositions with true, nor make religion a pretence to profit or preferment, nor do things which are like a vice, neither ever speak things dishonourable of God, nor abuse thy brother for Gods sake, nor be solicitous and over-busie to recover thy own little things, neither alwayes think it fit to lose thy charity by forcing thy brother to do justice; and all those things which are the outsid'es and faces, the garments and most discerned parts of religion, bee sure that they bee dressed according to all the circumstances of men, and by all the rules of common honesty, and publike reputation. Is it not a sad thing that the Jew should say, the Christians worship Images? or that it should become a proverb, that the Jew spends all in his passcover, the Moor in his marriage, and the Christian in his law-suits? that, what the first sacrifice is to religion, and the second to publike joy, wee should spend

A in malice, covetousnesse, and revenge? *Pudet hac opprobria nobis & dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli.* But among our selves also, we serve the Devils ends, and minister to an eternal dis-union, by saying and doing things which look unhand somely. One sort of men is superstitious, phantastical, greedy of honour, and tenacious of propositions to fill the purse, and his religion is thought nothing but policy, and opinion. Another sayes he hath a good religion, but he is the most indifferent and cold person in the world, either to maintain it, or to live according to it; the one dresses the images of Saints with fine clothes, the other lets the poor go naked, and disrobes the priests that minister in the religion. A third uses God worse then all this, and sayes of him such things that are scandalous even to an honest man; and such which would undo a good mans reputation: And a fourth, yet endures no governour but himself, and pretends to set up Christ and make himself his lieutenant. And a fifth hates all government, and from all this it comes to passe that it is hard for a man to choose his side, and he that chooses wisest, takes that which hath in it least hurt; but some he must endure, or live without communion: and every Church of one denomination is, or hath been too incurious of preventing infamy or disreputation to their confessions.

C One thing I desire should be observed, that here the Question being concerning prudence, and the matter of doing reputation to our religion, it is not enough to say, we can with learning justify all that we do, and make all whole with 3. or 4. distinctions; for possibly the man that went to visit the *Corinthian* Laie, if he had been asked why he dishonoured himself with so unhand some an enterance, might finde an excuse to legitimate his act, or at least to make himself beleieve well of his own person; but he that intends to do himself honour, must take care that he be not suspected, that he give no occasion of reproachful language; for fame and honour is a nice thing, tender as a womans chastity, or like the face of the purest mirrour, which a foul breath, or an unwhole some air, or a watry eye can sully, and the beauty is lost although it be not dashed in pieces. When a man or a sect is put to answer for themselves in the matter of reputation, they with their distinctions wipe the glasse, and at last can do nothing but make it appear it was not broken; but their very absterfion and laborious excuses confesse it was foul and faulty: We must know that all sorts of men, and all sects of Christians, have not onely the mistakes of men and their prejudices to contest withall, but the calumnies and aggravation of Devils: and therefore it will much ease our accounts of doomf day, if we are now so prudent that men will not be offended here, nor the Devils furnished with a libell in the day of our great account.

To this rule appertains that we be curious in observing the
Z circumstan-

SERMON
XXI.

circumstances of men, and satisfie all their reasonable expectations, and do things at that rate of charity and religion which they are taught to be prescribed in the institution. **A** There are some things which are *undesirables* rather than *goods*, such which may become a just Heathen, but not a holy Christian; a man of the world, but not a man *professing* godlinesse. Because when the greatnesse of the man, or the excellency of the Law, engaged us upon great severity, or an exemplar vertue, what soever is lesse then it renders the man unworthy of the religion, or the religion unworthy of its fame: Men think themselves abused, and therefore return shame for payment. We never read of an Apostle that went to law; and it is but reasonable **B** to expect that of all men in the world, Christians should not be such fighting people, and Clergy men should not command Armies, and Kings should not be drunk, and subjects should not strike Princes for justice, and an old man should not be youthfull in talk, nor in his habit; and women should not swear, and great men should not lie, and a poor man should not oppresse; for besides the sin of some of them, there is an indecency in all of them; and by being contrary to the end of an office, or the reputation of a state, or the sobrieties of a graver or sublimed person, they asperse the religion as insufficient to keep the persons within the bounds of fame and common reputation. **C**

But above all things, those sects of Christians whose professed doctrine brings destruction and diminution to government; give the most intolerable scandal, and dishonour to the institution; and it had been impossible that Christianity should have prevailed over the wisdom and power of the Greeks and Romans, if it had not been humble to superiours, patient of injuries, charitable to the needy, a great exactor of obedience to Kings, even to *heathens*, that they might be won, and convinced; and to *persecutors*, that they might be sweetned in their anger, or upbraided for their cruel injustice: for so doth the humble vine creep at the foot of an oak, and leans upon its lowest bace, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage, and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the leavie nation. Religion of it self is soft, easie and defenselesse, and God hath made it grow up with empire, and leane upon the arms of Kings, and it cannot well grow alone; and if it shall like the *ivy* suck the heart of the oak upon whose body it grew and was supported, it will be pulled down from its usurped eminence, and fire and shame shall be its portion. **D** We cannot complain if Princes arm against those Christians, who if they are suffered to preach will disarm the Princes; and it will be hard to perswade that Kings are bound to protect and nourish those that will prove ministers **E**

A nisters of their own exaunderation: And no Prince can have juster reason to forbid, nor any man have greater reason to deny communion to a family, then if they go about to destroy the power of the one, or corrupt the duty of the other. The particulars of this rule are very many; I shall onely instance in one more, because it is of great concernment to the publike interest of Christendome.

B There are some persons whose religion is hugely disgraced, because they change their propositions according as their temporall necessities or advantages do return. They that in their weakness and beginning cry out against all violence as against persecution: and from being suffered, swell up till they be prosperous, and from thence to power, and at last to Tyranny; and then suffer none but themselves, and trip up those feet, which they humbly kissed, that themselves should not be trampled upon; these men tell all the world that *at first* they were pusillanimous, or *at last* outrageous; that their doctrine at first served their fear, and at last served their rage, and that they did not at all intend to serve God: and then who shall believe them in any thing else? Thus some men declaim against the faults of Governours, that themselves may govern; and when the power was in their hands, what was C a fault in others, is in them *necessity*; as if a sin could be hallowed for comming into their hands. Some Greeks at Florence subscribed the Article of Purgatory, and condemned it in their own Diocesses: And the Kings supremacy in causes Ecclesiastical, was earnestly defended against the pretences of the Bishop of Rome, and yet when he was thrust out, some men were, and are violent to submit the King to their Consistories, as if he were Supreme in defiance of the Pope, and yet not Supreme over his own Clergy. These Articles are managed too suspiciously,

D *Omnia se perdit, si famam servare memento.*
You lose all the advantages to your cause, if you lose your reputation.

5. It is a duty also of Christian prudence, that the teachers of others by authority, or reprovers of their vices by charity, should also make their persons apt to do it without objection.

Leti pedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus.

E No man can endure the *Gracchi* preaching against sedition, nor *Verres* prating against theevry, or *Milo* against homicide: and if *Herod* had made an oration of humility, or *Antiochus* of mercy, men would have thought, it had been a designe to evil purposes. He that means to gain a soul, must not make his Sermon an ostentation of his Eloquence, but the law of his own life. If a Gramma-

SERMON
XXI.

rian should speak folaccifines, or a Musician fing like a bittern, he becomes ridiculous for offending in the faculty he professes: So it is in them who minister to the conversion of souls: If they fail in their own life, when they profess to instruct another, they are defective in their proper part, and are unskillfull to all their purposes; and the Cardinal of Crema did with ill successe tempt the English Priests to quit their chaste marriages, when himself was deprehended in unchaste embraces. For good counsel seems to be unhallowed, when it is reached forth by an impure hand, and he can ill be beleaved by another, whose life so confutes his rules, that it is plain he does not beleve himself. Those Churches that are zealous for souls, must send into their ministeries men so innocent, that evil persons may have no excuse to be any longer vicious. When *Gorgias* went about to perswade the Greeks to be at peace, he had eloquence enough to do advantage to his cause, and reason enough to presse it: But *M. Lanthius* was glad to put him off, by telling him that he was not fit to perswade peace, who could not agree at home with his wife, nor make his wife agree with her maid; and he that could not make peace between three single persons, was unapt to prevail for the reuniting fourteen or fifteen Common-wealths: And this thing Saint Paul remarks by enjoyning that a Bishop should be chosen such a one as knew well to rule his own house, or else he is not fit to rule the Church of God. And when thou perswadest thy brother to be chaste, let not him deride thee for thy intemperance; and it will ill become thee to be severe against an idle servant, if thou thy self beeest uselesse to the publike; and every notorious vice is infinitely against the spirit of government, and depresses the man to an evennesse with common persons,

Facinus quos inquinat, aequat, to reprove, belongs to a Superiour; and as innocence gives a man advantage over his brother, giving him an artificiall and adventitious authority; so the follies and scandals of a publike and Governing man destroyes the efficacy of that authority that is just and naturall. Now this is directly an office of Christian prudence, that good offices and great authority become not ineffective by ill conduct.

Hither also it appertains, that in publike or private reproofs, we observe circumstances of *time*, of *place*, of *person*, of *disposition*. The vices of a King are not to be opened publicly; and Princes must not be reprehended as a man reproves his servant; but by Categoricalall propositions, by abstracted declamations by reprehensions of a crime in its single nature, in private, with humility, and arts of insinuation: And it is against Christian prudence not onely to use a Prince or great Personage with common language, but it is as great an imprudence to pretend for such a rudenesse, the examples

A examples of the Prophets in the Old Testament. For their case was extraordinary, their calling peculiar, their commission special, their spirit miraculous, their authority great; as to that single mission, they were like thunder on the trump of God, sent to do that office plainly, for the doing of which in that manner, GOD had given no commission to any ordinary minister. And therefore we never finde that the Priests did use that freedom, which the Prophets were commanded to use, whose very words being put into their mouthes, it was not to be esteemed an humane act, or a lawfull manner of doing an ordinary office; neither could it become
B a precedent to them whose authority is precarious and without coercion, whose spirit is allayed with Christian graces and duties of humility, whose words are not prescribed, but left to the conduct of prudence, as it is to be advised by publick necessities, and private circumstances, in ages where all things are so ordered, that what was fit and pious amongst the old Jews, would be incivil and intolerable to the latter Christians. Hee also that reproves a vice should also treat the persons with honour, and civilities, and by fair opinions, and sweet addresses place the man in the regions of modesty, and the confines of grace, and the fringes of repentance. For some men are more restrained by an imperfect, feared shame,
C so long as they think there is a reserve of reputation which they may secure, then they can be with all the furious declamations of the world, when themselves are represented ugly and odious, full of shame, and actually punished with the worst of temporal evils, beyond which he fears not here to suffer, and from whence because he knows it will be hard for him to be redeemed by an after-game of reputation, it makes him desperate and incorrigible by fraternal correction.

A zealous man hath not done his duty, when hee calls his brother drunkard and beast, and he may better do it, by telling him
D he is a man, and sealed with Gods Spirit, and honoured with the title of a Christian, and is, or ought to be reputed as a discreet person by his friends; and a governour of a family, or a guide in his countrey, or an example to many, and that it is huge pity so many excellent things should be sullied, and allayed with what is so much below all this. Then a reprovor does his duty, when he is severe against the vice, and charitable to the man, and carefull of his reputation, and sorry for his reall dishonour, and observant of his circumstances, and watchfull to surprize his affections and resolutions; there where they are most tender, and most terrible; and
E men will not be in love with vertue whither they are forced with rudenesse and incivilities; but they love to dwell there whither they are invited friendly, and where they are treated civilly, and treated liberally, and lead by the hand and the eye to honour and felicity.

SERMON
XXI.

6. It is a duty of Christian prudence not to suffer our souls to walk alone, unguarded, unguided, and more single then in other actions and interests of our lives, which are of lesse concernment. *Ne sibi & singulari*, said the Wise man; *Wo to him that is alone*: and if wee consider how much God hath done to secure our souls, and after all that, how many wayes there are for a mans soul to miscarry, wee should think it very necessary to call to a spiritual man to take us by the hand, to walk in the wayes of God, and to lead us in all the regions of duty, and thorow the labyrinths of danger. For God, who best loves, and best knows how to value our souls, set a price no lesse upon it then the life-blood of his Holy Son; he hath treated it with variety of usages according as the world had new guises, and new necessities; hee abates it with punishment to make us avoid greater; he shortned our life, that we might live for ever; he turns sicknesse into vertue; he brings good out of evil; he turns enmities to advantages; our very sins into repentances, and stricter walking; hee defeats all the follies of men, and all the arts of the Devil, and layes snares, and uses violence to secure our obedience; he sends Prophets and Priests to invite us, and to threaten us to felicities; he restrains us with laws, and he bridles us with honour, and shame, reputation, and society, friends, and foes; hee layes hold on us by the instruments of all the passions; he is enough to fill our love, he satisfies our hope, he affrights us with fear, hee gives us part of our reward in hand, and entertains all our faculties with the promises of an infinite and glorious portion; he curbs our affections, he directs our wills, he instructs our understandings with Scriptures, with perpetual Sermons, with good books, with frequent discourses, with particular observations, and great experience, with accidents and judgements, with rare events of providence, and miracles; he sends his Angels to be our guard, and to place us in opportunities of vertue, and to take us off from ill-company and places of danger, to set us neer to good example; he gives us his holy Spirit, and he becomes to us a principle of a mighty grace, descending upon us in great variety, and undiscerned events, besides all those parts of it which men have reduced to a method and an art: and after all this, he forgives us infinite irregularities, and spares us every day, and still expects, and passes by, and waits all our dayes, still watching to do us good, and to save that soul which he knows is so precious, one of the chiefest of the works of GOD, and an image of Divinity. Now from all these arts and mercies of God, besides that wee have infinite reason to adore his goodnesse, we have also a demonstration, that we ought to do all that possibly we can, and extend all our faculties, and watch all our opportunities, and take in all assistances to secure the interest of our soul, for which God is pleased to take such care, and use so many arts for its security. If it

A it were not highly worth it. God would not do it. If it were not all of it necessary, God would not do it. But if it be worth it, and all of it be necessary, why should wee not labour in order to this great end? If it be worth so much to God, it is so much more to us: for if we perish, his felicity is undisturbed, but we are undone, infinitely undone. It is therefore worth taking in a spiritual guide, so far we are gone.

But because we are in the question of Prudence, wee must consider whether it be necessary to do so: For every man thinks himself wise enough as to the conduct of his soul, and managing of his eternal interest; and divinity is every mans trade, and the Scriptures speak our own language, and the commandments are few and plain, and the laws are the measure of justice, and if I say my prayers, and pay my debts, my duty is soon summed up; and thus wee usually make our accounts for eternity, and at this rate onely take care for heaven; but let a man be questioned for a portion of his estate, or have his life shaken with diseases, then it will not be enough to employ one agent, or to send for a good woman to minister a potion of the juices of her countrey-garden; but the ablest Lawyers, and the skilfullest Physitians, and the advice of friends; and huge caution, and diligent attendances, and a curious watching concerning all the accidents and little passages of our disease, and truly a mans life, and health is worth all that, and much more, and in many cases it needs it all.

But then is the soul the onely safe, and the onely trifling thing about us? Are not there a thousand dangers, and ten thousand difficulties, and innumerable possibilities of a misadventure? Are not all the Congregations in the world divided in their Doctrines, and all of them call their own way necessary, and most of them call all the rest damnable? we had need of a wise Instructor, and a prudent choice at our first entrance, and election of our side: and when we are well in the matter of Faith for its object, and institution; all the evils of my self, and all the evils of the Church, and all the good that happens to evil men, every day of danger, the periods of sicknesse, and the day of death, are dayes of tempest and storme, and our faith will suffer shipwrack unlesse it be strong, and supported, and directed. But who shall guide the vessel when a stormy passion, or a violent imagination transports the man? who shall awaken his reason, and charm his passion into slumber & instruction? How shal a man make his fears confident, and allay his confidence with fear, and make the allay with just proportions, and steer evenly, between the extremes, or call upon his sleeping purposes, or aduate his choices, or binde him to reason in all the wandrings and ignorances, in his passion and mistakes? For suppose the man of great skill, and great learning in the wayes of religion, yet if hee be abused by accident, or by his own will, who shall then judge his cases of conscience, and awa-

SERMON
XXIX

ken his duty, and renew his holy principle, and actuate his spiritu- A
all powers? For Physicians that prescribe to others, do not mini-
ster to themselves in cases of danger, and violent sicknesses; and in
matter of distemperature we shall not find that books alone will do
all the work of a spiritual Physician, more then of a natural. I will
not go about to increase the dangers and difficulties of the soul, to
represent the assistance of a spiritual man to be necessary. But of this
I am sure, our not understanding, and our not considering our soul,
makes us first to neglect, and then many times to lose it. But is not
every man an unequal judge in his own case? and therefore the wis-
dom of God and the lawes hath appointed tribunals, and Judges, B
and arbitrators, and that men are partial in the matter of souls, it is
infinitely certain, because amongst those millions of souls that perish,
not one in ten thousand but believes himself in a good condition;
and all sects of Christians think they are in the right, and few are pa-
tient to enquire whether they be or no: then add to this, that the
Questions of souls, being clothed with circumstances of matter and
particular contingencie, are or may be infinite, and most men are so
unfortunate, that they have so intangled their cases of conscience,
that there where they have done something good, it may bee, they
have mingled half a dozen evils: and when interests are confound- C
ed, and governments altered, and power strives with right, and in-
sensibly passes into right, and duty to God, would faine bee reconcil-
led with duty to our relatives, will it not be more then necessary that
we should have some one that wee may enquire of after the way to
heaven, which is now made intricate by our follies and inevitable
accidents? But by what instrument shall men alone, and in their
own cases, be able to discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of
illusion, just confidence from presumption, fear from pusillanimity;
are not all the things and assistances in the world little enough to de-
fend us against *pleasure* and *pain*, the two great fountains of tempta- D
tion? Is it not harder to cure a lust then to cure a feaver? and are
not the deceptions and follies of men, and the arts of the Devil, and
enticements of the world, and the deceptions of a mans own heart,
and the evils of sin, more evil and more numerous then the sicknes-
ses and diseases of any one man? and if a man perishes in his soul,
is it not infinitely more sad, then if he could rise from his grave and
die a thousand deaths over? Thus we are advanced a second step in
this prudentiall motive; God used many arts to secure our souls in-
terests, and there is infinite dangers, and infinite wayes of miscar-
riage in the souls interests, and therefore there is great necessity God E
should do all those mercies of security, and that we should do all the
under-ministeries we can in this great work.

But what advantage shall we receive by a spiritual Guide? much
every way. For this is the way that GOD hath appointed, who in
every age hath sent a succession of spiritual persons, whose office is
to

- A to minister in holy things, and to be *stewards of Gods household*, *shepherds of the flock*, *dispensers of the mysteries*, under mediators, and ministers of prayer, preachers of the law, expounders of questions, monitors of duty, conveyances of blessings, and that which is a good discourse in the mouth of another man, is from them an ordinance of God; and besides its natural efficacy and perswasion, it prevails by the way of blessing, by the reverence of his person, by divine institution, by the excellency of order, by the advantages of opinion and assistances of reputation, by the influence of the spirit who is the president of such ministeries, and who is appointed to all Christians according to the dispensation that is appointed to them; to the people in their obedience, and frequenting of the ordinance, to the Priest in his ministry and publick and private offices; To which also I adde this consideration, that as the Holy Sacraments are hugely effective to spiritual purposes, not onely because they convey a blessing to the worthy suscipients, but because men cannot be worthy suscipients unlesse they do many excellent acts of vertue in order to a previous disposition; so that in the whole conjunction, and transaction of affairs there is good done by way of proper efficacy and divine blessing; so it is in following the conduct of a spiritual man, and consulting with him in the matter of our souls; we cannot do it unlesse we consider our souls, and make religion our business and examine our present state, and consider concerning our danger, and watch and designe for our advantages, which things of themselves will set a man much forwarder in the way of Godlinesse; besides that naturally every man will lesse dare to act a sin for which he knows he shall feel a present shame in his discoveries made to the spiritual Guide, the man that is made the witness of his conversation, *ὁς ἐν Δεσφείῳ ἐστὶν μὴ δέσφει*. Holy men ought to know all things from God, and that relate to God. in order to the conduct of souls: and there is nothing to be said against this, if we do not suffer the devil in this affaire to abuse us, as he does many people in their opinions, teaching men to suspect there is a designe and a snake under the plantain? But so may they suspect Kings when they command obedience, or the Levites when they read the law of statutes, or Parents when they teach their children temperance, or Tutors when they watch their charge. However, it is better to venture the worst of the designe, then to lose the best of the assistance, and he that guides himself hath much work, and much danger; but he that is under the conduct of another, his work is easie, little and secure; it is nothing but diligence and obedience, and though it be a hard thing to rule well, yet nothing is easier then to follow and be obedient.
- B
- C
- D
- E

Sophoc.

Sermon XXII.

Of Christian Prudence.

Part III.

7. **A**S it is a part of Christian prudence to take into the conduct of our souls a spiritual man for a guide, so it is also of great concernment that we be prudent in the choice of him whom we are to trust in so great an interest.

Concerning which it will be impossible to give characters and significations particular enough to enable a choice without the interval assistances of prayer, experience and the Grace of God; He that describes a man can tell you the colour of his hair, his stature and proportions, and describe some general lines, enough to distinguish him from a Cyclops or a Saracen, but when you chance to see the man, you will discover figures or little features of which the description had produced in you no Phantasme, or expectation. And in the exterior significations of a sect there are more resemblances then in mens faces and greater uncertainty in the signes: and what is faulty strives so craftily to act the true and proper images of things, and the more they are defective in circumstances, the more curious they are in forms; and they also use such arts of gaining Profelytes which are of most advantage towards an effect, and therefore such which the true Christian ought to pursue, and the Apostles actually did, and they strive to follow their patterns in arts of perswasion, not onely because they would seem like them, but because they can have none so good, so effective to their purposes; that it follows that it is not more a duty to take care, that we be not corrupted with false teachers, then that we be not abused with false signes; for we as well finde a good man teaching a false proposition,

A position, as a good cause managed by ill men, and a holy cause is not always dressed with healthful symptoms; nor is there a cross alwayes set upon the doores of those congregations, who are infected with the plague of heresy.

B When Saint John was to separate false teachers from true, he took no other course but to remark the doctrine which was of God, and that should be the mark of cognisance to distinguish right shepherds from robbers and invaders. *every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: He that denieth it is not of God.* By this he bids his schollers to avoid the present sects of Ebion, Cerinthus, Simon Magus, and such other persons that denied that Christ was at all before he came, or that he came really in the flesh and a proper humanity. This is a clear note, and they that conversed with Saint John or believed his doctrine were sufficiently instructed in the present Questions; But this note will signifie nothing to us; for all sects of Christians *confesse Jesus Christ come in the flesh*, and the following sects did avoid that rock over which a great Apostle had hung out to plain a lantern.

C In the following ages of the Church men have been so curious to signifie misbelievers, that they have invented and observed some signes which indeed in some cases were true, real appendages of false believers; but yet such which were also, or might be common to them with good men, and members of the Catholike Church; some few I shall remark and give a short account of them that by removing the uncertain, we may fix our inquiries and direct them by certain significations; lest this art of prudence turn into folly and faction, error and secular designe.

D Some men distinguish error from truth by calling their adversaries doctrine, *new, and of yesterday*; and certainly this is a good signe if it be rightly applyed; for since all Christian doctrine is that which Christ taught his Church, and the Spirit enlarged, or expounded, and the Apostles delivered, we are to begin the Christian *era* for our faith and parts of religion by the period of their preaching: our account begins then, and whatsoever is contrary to what they taught is new and false; and whatsoever is besides, what they taught, is no part of our religion (and then no man can be prejudiced for believing it or not) and if it be adopted into the confessions of the Church, the proposition is alwayes so uncertain, that it is not to be admitted into the faith; and therefore if it be old in respect of our dayes, it is not therefore necessary to be believed: if it be new, it may be received into opinion according to its probability, and no sects or interest are to be divided upon such accounts. This onely I desire to be observed, that when a truth returns from banishment by a *postminum*, if it was from the first, though the Holy fire hath been buried, or the river ran under ground, yet that we do not call that new; since newnesse is not to be accounted

SERMON
XXX

counted of by a proportion to our short-lived memories, or to the broken records and fragments of story left after the inundation of barbarisme and war, and change of Kingdoms and corruption of Authors; but by its relation to the fountain of our truths, and the birth of our religion under our Fathers in Christ, the holy Apostles, and Disciples: a Camel was a new thing to them that saw it in the fable; But yet it was created as soon as a cow or the domestick creatures, and some people are apt to call every thing new, which they never heard of before, as if all religion were to be measured by the standards of their observation, or country-customs. Whatsoever was not taught by Christ, or his Apostles, though it came in by Papias, or Dionysius, by Arius, or Liberius, is certainly new as to our account; and whatsoever is taught to us by the Doctors of the present age, if it can shew its test from the beginning of our period for revelation, is not to be called *new* though it be pressed with a new zeal and discoursed of by unheard of arguments; that is, though men be ignorant and need to learn it, yet it is not therefore new or unnecessary.

Some would have false teachers sufficiently signified by a name or the owning of a private Appellative, as of *Papist*, *Lutheran*, *Calvinist*, *Zwinglian*, *Socinian*; and thinks it enough to denominate them not of Christ if they are called by the name of a man. And indeed the thing is in it self ill: but then if by this mark we shall esteem false teachers sufficiently signified, we must follow no man, no Church, nor no communion: for all are by their adversaries marked with an appellative of separation and singularity, and yet themselves are tenacious of a good name, such as they choose, or such as is permitted to them by fame, and the people, and a natural necessity of making a distinction. Thus the Donatists called themselves *the flock of God*, and the Novarians called the *Catholicks traditors*, and the Eustathians called themselves *Catholicks* and the worshippers of images made *Iconoclast* to be a name of scorn, and men made names as they listed, or as the fate of the market went. And if a Doctor preaches a doctrine which another man likes not, but preaches the contradictory, he that consents and he that refuses have each of them a teacher by whose name, if they please to wrangle, they may be signified. It was so in the Corinthian Church, with this onely difference, that they divided themselves by names which signified the same religion. *I am of Paul*, and *I of Apollo*, and *I am of Peter*, and *I of Christ*; these Apostles were ministers of Christ; and so does every teacher new or old among the Christians, pretend himself to be; Let that therefore be examined; if he ministers to the truth of Christ and the religion of his master, let him be entertained as a servant of his Lord; but if an appellative be taken from his name, there is a faction commenced in it; and there is a fault in the men if there be none in the doctrine; but that the doctrine be true or false

A false, to be received, or to be rejected because of the name is accidental and extrinsecal; and therefore not to be determined by this signe.

3. Amongst some men a sect is sufficiently thought to be re-
proved, if it subdivides and breaks into little fractions, or changes
its own opinions: indeed if it declines its own doctrine, no man
hath reason to beleve them upon their word, or to take them upon
the stock of reputation, which (themselves being judges) they
have forfeited and renounced in the changing that which at first
they obtruded passionately. And therefore in this case there is no-
thing to be done, but to believe the men so farre as they have reason
to believe themselves: that is, to consider when they prove what
they say: and they that are able to do so, are not persons in danger
to be seduced by a bare authority, unlesse they list themselves; for
others that sink under an unavoidable prejudice, God will take care
for them if they be good people; and their case shall be considered
by and by. But for the other part of the signe; when men fall out
among themselves for other interests or opinions, it is no argument,
that they are in an error concerning that doctrine, which they all
unitedly teach or condemn respectively; but it hath in it some pro-
bability that their union is a testimony of truth, as certainly as
that their fractions are a testimony of their zeal, or honesty, or
weaknesse (as it happens): and if we Christians be too decretory
in this instance, it will be hard for any of us to keep a Jew from ma-
king use of it against the whole religion which from the dayes of
the Apostles hath been rent into innumerable sects, and under-sects,
springing from mistake or interest, from the arts of the Devil, or
the weaknesse of man. But from hence we may make an advantage
in the way of prudence, and become sure that all *that doctrine is cer-
tainly true*, in which the generality of Christians (who are divided
in many things, yet) do constantly agree: and that *that doctrine is
also sufficient*, since it is certain that because in all Communions and
Churches there are some very good men, that do all their duty to
the getting of truth, God will not fail in any thing that is ne-
cessary to them that honestly and heartily desire to obtain it: and
therefore if they rest in the heartinesse of that, and live accordingly,
and superinduce nothing to the destruction of that, they have no-
thing to do but to rely upon Gods goodnesse: and if they perish, it
is certain they cannot help it, and that is demonstration enough that
they cannot perish, considering the justice and goodnesse of our
Lord and Judge.

4. Whoever break the bands of a Society, or Communion,
and go out from that Congregation in whose Confession they are
baptized, do an intolerable scandal to their doctrine and persons,
and give suspicious men reason to decline their Assemblies, and
not to choose them at all for any thing of their authority, or out-
ward

SERMON
XXIII.

ward circumstances: and Saint Paul bids the Romans to *mark* A
them that cause divisions and offences. But the following words
 make their caution prudent and practicable, [*contrary to the do-*
ctrine which ye have learned and avoid them] they that recede from
 the doctrine which they have learned, they cause the offence, and
 if they also obtrude this upon their congregations, they also make
 the division. For it is certain, if we receive any doctrine contrary
 to what Christ gave, and the Apostles taught, for the authority of
 any man, then we call *men Masters*, and leave *our Master which is*
in heaven; and in that case we must separate from the Congregation
 and adhere to Christ; but this is not to be done, unlesse the case be
 evident and notorious. But as it is hard, that the publike doctrine B
 of a church should be rifled, and misunderstood, and reprov'd, and
 rejected, by any of her wilful or ignorant sons and daughters: so
 it is also as hard that they should be bound, not to see when the case
 is plain and evident. There may be mischiefs on both sides; but
 the former sort of evils men may avoid if they will; for they may
 be humble and modest, and entertain better opinions of their Super-
 iours then of themselves, and in doubtful things give them the hon-
 our of a just opinion: and if they do not do so, that evil will be
 their own private: for that it become not publike, the King and the C
 Bishop are to take care; but for the later sort of evil it will certainly
 become universal; If (I say) an authoritative false doctrine be
 imposed, and is to be accepted accordingly; for then all men shall
 be bound to professe against their conscience, that is, *with their*
mouthes *unto confession unto salvation*, what *with their hearts* they believe
unto righteousness. The best way of remedying both the evils is,
 that Governours lay no burden of doctrines or laws but what are ne-
 cessary, or very profitable: and that Inferiours do not contend for
 things unnecessary, nor call any thing necessary that is not: till then
 there will be evils on both sides; and although the Governours are D
 to carry the Question in the point of law, reputation, and publike
 government, yet as to Gods Judicature they will bear the bigger
 load, who in his right do him an injury, and by the impresses of *his*
authority destroy *his truth*. But in this case also, although separa-
 ting be a suspicious thing and intolerable, unlesse it be when a sin is
 imposed; yet to separate is also accidental to truth: for some men
 separate with reason, some men against reason; therefore here all
 the certainty that is *in the thing*, is when the truth is secured, and all
 the security to the men will be in the *humility of their persons*, and
 the heartinesse and simplicity of their intention, and diligence of E
 inquiry. The Church of England had reason to separate from the
 Confession and practises of Rome in many particulars, and yet
 if her children separate from her they may be unreasonable and
 impious.

5. The wayes of direction which we have from holy Scripture
 to

A to distinguish false Apostles from true, are taken from their doctrine or their lives. That of the doctrine is the more sure way if we can hit upon it; but that also is the thing signified and needs to have other signes. Saint John and Saint Paul took this way, for they were able to do it infallibly. *All that confesse Jesus incarnate are of God*, said Saint John; those men that deny it are hereticks; avoid them: and Saint Paul bids to *observe them that cause divisions and offences against the doctrine delivered*. Them also avoid, that do so. And we might do so as easily as they, if the world would only make their *depositum*, that doctrine which they delivered to all men; that is, *the Creed*, and superinduce nothing else, but suffer Christian faith to rest in its own perfect simplicity, unmingled with arts, and opinions, and interests. This course is plain and easie, and I will not intricate it with more words, but leave it directly in its own truth and certainty, with this onely direction. That when we are to choose our doctrine, or our side, we take that which is in the plain unexpounded words of Scripture; for in that onely our religion can consist. Secondly choose that which is most advantagious to a holy life, to the proper graces of a Christian, to humility, to charity, to forgivenesse and alms, to obedience, and complying with Governments, to the honour of God and the exaltation of his attributes, and to the conservation and advantages of the publike societies of men; and this last, Saint Paul directs, *Let ours be carefull to maintain good works for necessary uses*, for he that heartily pursues these proportions cannot be an ill man, though he were accidentally and in the particular explications deceived.

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D 6. But because this is an act of *wisdom*, rather then *prudence*, and supposes *science* or *knowledge* rather then *experience*, therefore it concerns the prudence of a Christian to observe the practise, and the rules of practise, their lives, and pretences, the designs, and colours, the arts of conduct, and gaining profelytes, which their Doctors and Catechists do use in order to their purposes, and in their ministry about souls. For although many signes are uncertain, yet some are infallible, and some are highly probable.

E 7. Therefore those teachers that pretend to be guided by a private spirit are certainly false Doctors. I remember what *Simonides* in *Plutarch* tells concerning *Socrates*, that if he heard any man say he saw a divine vision, he presently esteemed him vain and proud; but if he pretended onely to have heard a voice or the word of God, he listened to that religiously, and would enquire of him with curiosity. There was some reason in his fancy; for God does not communicate himself by the eye to men, but by the ear: *yo saw no figure, but ye heard a voice* said Moyses to the people concerning God: and therefore if any man pretends to speak the word of God, we will enquire concerning it; the man may the better

SERMON
XXII,

be heard, because he may be certainly reprov'd if he speaks amisse: but if he pretends to *visions* and *revelations*, to a private spirit and a *mission extraordinary*, the man is proud and unlearned, vicious, and impudent. No Scripture is of private interpretation (saith S. Peter) that is, of private emission or declaration. Gods words were delivered indeed by single men, but such as were publickly designed Prophets, remarked with a known character, approved of by the high Priest, and Sanhedrim indued with a publick spirit, and his doctrines were alwayes agreeable to the other Scriptures. But if any man pretends now to the spirit, either it must be a private or publick: if it be private, it can but be useful to himself alone, and it may cozen him too, if it be not assisted by the spirit of a publick man. But if it be a publick spirit, it must enter in at the publick door of ministeries, and divine ordinances, of Gods grace, and mans endeavour, it must be subject to the Prophets, it is discernable and judicable by them, and therefore may be rejected, and then it must pretend no longer. For he that will pretend to an extraordinary spirit, and refuse to be tried by the ordinary wayes, must either prophesie, or work miracles, or must have a voice from heaven to give him testimony. The Prophets in the old Testament, and the Apostles in the new, and Christ between both had no other way of extraordinary probation: and they that pretend to any thing extraordinary, cannot, ought not to be beleev'd, unless they have something more then their own word. *If I bear witnesse of my self, my witnesse is not true*, said, Truth it self, our Blessed Lord. But secondly, they that intend to teach by an extraordinary spirit, if they pretend to teach according to Scripture must be examined by the measures of Scripture, and then their extraordinary must be judged by the ordinary spirit, and stands or falls by the rules of every good mans religion, and publick government, and then we are well enough. But if they speak any thing against Scripture, it is the spirit of Antichrist, and the spirit of the Devil. *For if an Angel from heaven (he certainly is a spirit) preach any other doctrine, let him be accursed*.

But this pretence of a single and extraordinary spirit is nothing else but the spirit of pride, error, and delusion, a snare to catch easie and credulous souls, which are willing to die for a gay word and a distorted face: it is the parent of folly, and giddy doctrine, impossible to be proved, and therefore uselesse to all purposes of religion, reason, or sober counsels: it is like an invisible colour, or musick without a sound, it is, and indeed is so intended to be, a direct overthrow of order, and government, and publick ministeries: It is bold to say any thing, and resolv'd to prove nothing: it imposes upon willing people after the same manner that Oracles and the lying Demons did of old time, abusing men not by proper efficacy of its own, but because the men love to be abused;

A it is a great disparagement to the sufficiency of Scripture, and
 perferes the Divine providence, for giving to so many ages of the
 Church an imperfect religion, expressly against the truth of their
 words who said, they *had declared the whole truth of God, and told*
all the will of God: and it is an affront to the Spirit of God, the Spi-
 rit of wisdom, and knowledge, of order, and publike ministeries.
 But the will furnishes out malice, and the understanding sends out
 levity, and they marry, and produce a phantastick dream, and the
 daughter sucking winde instead of the milk of the word, grows up
 to madnesse, and the spirit of reprobation. Besides all this, an extra-
 ordinary spirit is extremely unnecessary, and GOD does not give
 inimissions and miracles from heaven to no purpose, and to no
 necessities of his Church; for the supplying of which he hath given
 B *Apostles and Evangelists, Prophets and Pastors, Bishops and Priests,*
the spirit of Ordination, and the spirit of Instruction, Catechists, and
Teachers, Arts and Sciences, Scriptures, and a constant succession of
Expositors, the testimony of Churches, and a constant line of Tra-
dition, or delivery of Apostolical Doctrine in all things necessary
 to salvation. And after all this, to have a *fungus* arise from the
 belly of mud and darknesse, and nourish a gloworm, that shall
 challenge to out-shine the lanterne of Gods word, and all the can-
 C dles which God set upon a hill, and all that the Spirit hath set up-
 on the candlesticks, and all *the starres in Christs right hand,* is to
 annull all the excellent, established, orderly, and certain effects
 of the Spirit of God, and to worship the false fires of the night. He
 therefore that will follow a Guide that leads him by an extraordi-
 nary spirit, shall go an extraordinary way, and have a strange for-
 tune, and a singular religion, and a portion by himself, a great way
 off from the common inheritance of the Saints, who are all led by
 the Spirit of God, and have one heart, and one minde, one faith, and
 one hope, the same Baptisme, and the helps of the Ministry, lead-
 D ing them to the common-countray, which is the portion of all that
 are the sons of adoption, consigned by the Spirit of God, *the earnest*
of their inheritance.

Concerning the pretence of a private spirit, for interpretation
 of the confessed doctrine of God (the holy Scriptures) it will not
 so easily come into this Question of chusing our spiritual Guides;
 Because every person that can bee Candidate in this Office, that can
 be chosen to guide others, must bee a publike man, that is, of a
 holy calling, sanctified or separate publicly to the Office; and
 then to interpret is part of his calling, and imployment, and to do
 E so is the work of a publike spirit; he is ordained and designed, hee
 is commanded and enabled to do it: and in this there is no other
 caution to be interposed, but that the more publike the man is, of
 the more authority his interpretation is; and hee comes neereſt to
 a law of order, and in the matter of government is to be observed:

SERMON
XXII,

but the more holy and the more learned the man is, his interpretation in matter of Question is more likely to be true: and though lesse to bee pressed as to the publike confession, yet it may bee more effective to a private perswasion, provided it be done without scandal, or lessening the authority, or disparagement to the more publike person.

8. Those are to be suspected for evil guides, who to get authority among the people pretend a great zeal, and use a bold liberty in re-proving Princes and Governours, Nobility and Prelates; for such homilies cannot be the effects of a holy religion, which lay a snare for authority, and undermine power, and discontent the people, and make them bold against Kings, and immodest in their own stations, and trouble the government. Such men may speak a truth, or teach a true doctrine; for every such designe does not unhallow the truth of God; but they take some truths and force them to minister to an evil end; but therefore mingle not in the communities of such men, for they will make it a part of your religion, to prosecute that end openly which they by arts of the *Tempter* have insinuated privately.

But if ever you enter into the seats of those Doctors that speak reproachfully of their Superiours, or detract from government, or love to curse the King in their heart, or slander him with their mouths, or disgrace their persons, blesse your self and retire quickly; for there dwells the plague, but the Spirit of God is not President of the assembly; and therefore you shall observe in all the characters which the B. Apostles of our Lord made for describing and avoiding societies of heretikes, false-guides, and bringers in of strange doctrines, still they reckon *treason and rebellion*; so Saint Paul, *In the last dayes perillous times shall come, the men shall have the form of godlinesse, and deny the power of it; they shall be Traitors, heady, high-minded; that's their characteristic note.* So Saint Peter, *the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to bee punished. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they; self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.* The same also is recorded and observed by Saint Jude, *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion and speak evil of dignities.* These three testimonies are but the declaration of one great contingency; they are the same prophesy declared by three Apostolical men, that had the gift of prophecy: and by this character the Holy Ghost in all ages hath given us caution to avoid such assemblies, where the speaking and ruling man shall be the canker of government; and a preacher of sedition, who shall either ungirt the Princes sword, or unloose the button of their mantle.

9. But the Apostles in all these prophecies have remarked lust to be

2 Tim. 3. 4, 5

2 Pet. 2. 10

Vers. 8.
ep Jude.

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E

A be the inseparable companion of these rebel prophets: *they are filthy dreamers, they defile the flesh*, so Saint Jude: *they walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness*, so Saint Peter; *they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, incontinent and sensual*, so Saint Paul. And by this part of the character, as the Apostles remarked the Nicolaitans, and Gnosticks, the Carpocratians and all their impure branches, which began in their dayes, and multiplied after their deaths, so they prophetically did fore signifie all such sects to be avoided, who to catch *silly women laden with sins*, preach doctrines of ease and licentiousnesse, apt to countenance and encourage vile things, and not apt to restrain a passion, or mortifie a sin. Such as

B those; that God sees no sin in his children: that no sin will take us from Gods favour: that all of such a party are elect people: that God requires of us nothing but faith: and that faith which justifies is nothing but a meer beleieving, that we are Gods chosen: that we are not tied to the law of commandments: that the law of grace is a law of liberty: and that liberty is to do what we list: that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes: that simple fornication is no sin: these are such doctrines, that upon the belief of them, men may do any thing, and will do that which shall satisfy their own desires, and promote their interests, and seduce

C their three-disciples: and indeed it was not without great reason that these three Apostles joyned *lust* and *treason* together; because the former is so shamefull a crime, and renders a mans spirit naturally averse to government, that if it falls upon the person of a Ruler, it takes from him the spirit of government, and renders him *diffident, pusillanimous, private, and ashamed*; if it happen in the person of a subject, it makes him hate the man that shall shame him and punish him: it hates the light and the Sunne, because that opens him, and therefore is much more against government because that publishes and punishes too. One thing I desire to be

D observed, that though the primitive heresies now named, and all those others their successors practised and taught horrid impurities, yet they did not invade government at all, and therefore those sects that these Apostles did signifie by prophecy, and in whom both these are concentred, were to appear in some latter times; and the dayes of the prophecy were not then to be fulfilled; what they are since, every age must judge, by its own experience, and for its own interest. But Christian religion is so pure and holy, that *chastity* is sometimes used for the whole religion, and to do an action

E *chastly* signifies purity of intention, abstraction from the world, and separation from low and secular ends, the virginity of the soul, and its union with God; and all deviations and estrangements from GOD, and adhesion to forbidden objects is called *fornication* and *adultery*. Those sects therefore that teach, incourage, or practise impious, or unhallowed mixtures and shamefull lusts, are issues of the impure spirit,

Eloquia Domini
in casta eloquia

SERMON
XXII.

spirit, and most contrary to God who can behold no unclean thing.

10. Those Prophets and Pastors that pretend severity and live loosely, or are severe in small things, and give liberty in greater, or forbid some sinnes with extreme rigour, and yet practise or teach those that serve their interest, or constitute their sect, are to be suspected and avoided accordingly. *Nihil est hominum ineptā persuasione falsius, nec fida severitate ineptius.* All ages of the Church were extremely curious to observe when any new teachers did arise, what kinde of lives they lived: and if they pretended severely, and to a strict life, then they knew their danger doubled: for it is certain all that teach doctrines contrary to the established religion delivered by the Apostles, all they are evil men. God will not suffer a good man to be seduced damnably, much lesse can he be a seducer of others: and therefore you shall still observe the false Apostles to be furious, and vehement in their reproofs, and severe in their animadversions of others: but then if you watch their private, or stay till their numbers are full, or observe their spiritual habits, you shall finde them indulgent to themselves, or to return from their disguises, or so spiritually wicked, that their *pride*, or their *revenge*, their *envie*, or their *detraction*, their *scorn*, or their *complacency* in themselves, their *desire of prebeminence*, and their *impatience* of a rival, shall place them far enough in distance from a poor carnall sinner, whom they shall load with censures, and an upbraiding scorn; but themselves are like Devils, the spirits of darknesse, the spiritual wickedneses in high places. Some sects of men are very angry against servants for recreating and easing their labours with a lesse prudent and an unsevere refreshment; but the Patron of their sect shall oppress a wicked man and an unbelieving person; they shall chastise a drunkard and entertain murmurers; they shall not abide an oath, and yet shall force men to break three or four. This sect is to be avoided, because although it is good to be severe against carnal or bodily sins, yet it is not good to mingle with them who chastise a *bodily sin* to make way for a *spiritual*, or reprove a servant, that his Lord may sin alone, or punish a stranger and a begger that will not approve their sinnes, but will have sins of his own. Concerning such persons Saint Paul hath told us, that *they shall not proceed far, but their folly shall be manifest*, *ὁλίγον χερσὶν δουλεύειν τῇ πλάνῃ καὶ τῷ πονηρῷ αὐτοῦ*, said Lysias. *Cito ad naturam ficta reciderunt sua.* They that dissemble their sin and their manners, or make severity to serve loosenesse, and an imaginary vertue to minister to a real vice; they that *abhorre Idols*, and *would commit sacriledge*: chastise a drunkard, and promote sedition, declaim against the vanity of great persons, and then spoil them of their goods, reform manners and engrosse estates, talk godly and do impiously, these are teachers, which the Holy Spirit of God hath by three Apostles bid us to beware of, and decline as wee would run from the hollownesse of a grave, or the despairs and sorrows of the damned.

11. The

A 11. The substance of all is this, that we must not choose our doctrine by our guide; but our guide by the doctrine, and if we doubt concerning the doctrine, we may judge of that by the lives and designs of the Teachers: *By their fruits you shall know them*; and by the plain words of the scripture, by the Apostles Creed, and by the commandments, and by the certain known and established forms of government; These are the great *indices*, and so plain, apt and easy; that he that is deceived is so because he will be so; he is betrayed into it by his own lust and a voluntary chosen folly.

B 12. Besides these premises there are other little candles, that can help to make the judgement clearer, but they are such as do not signifie alone, but in conjunction with some of the precedent characters which are drawn by the great lines of Scripture. Such as are 1. When the teachers of sects stir up unprofitable and uselesse Questions, 2. When they causelesly retire from the universal customs of Christendom, 3. And cancel all the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our redemption, 4. When their confessions and Catechismes and their whole religion consist *ex professo* in speculations and ineffective notions in discourses of Angels and spirits in abstractions and raptures, in things they understand not, and of which they have no revelation. 5. Or else if their religion spends it self in ceremonies, outward guises, and material solemnities, and imperfect formes drawing the heart of the vine forth into leaves and irregular fruitless suckers, turning the substance into circumstances, and the love of God into gestures, and the effect of the spirit into the impertinent offices of a burdensom ceremonial. For by these two particulars the Apostles reprov'd the Jews and the Gnosticks, or those that from the School of Pythagoras pretended conversation with Angels and great knowledge of the secrets of the spirits, choosing rather Angels, and assigning them offices and charges, as in the Church of Rome to this day they do to Saints: to these add, 6. That we observe whether the guides of soules avoid to suffer for their religion, for then the matter is foul, on the man not fit to lead, that dares not die in cold blood for his religion: will the man lay his life and his soul upon the proposition? If so, then you may consider him upon his proper grounds, but if he refuses that, refuse his conduct sure enough, 7. You may also watch whether they do not choose their proselyts among the rich and vicious; that they may serve themselves upon his wealth, and their disciple upon his vice, 8. If their doctrines evidently and greatly serve the interest of wealth or honour, and are ineffective to piety, 9. If they strive to gain any one to their confession, and are negligent to gain them to good life, 10. If by pretences they lessen the severity of Christs precepts, and are easy in dispensations and licentious glosses: 11. If they invent suppletories to excuse an evil man, and yet to reconcile his bad life with the hopes of heaven, you have reason to suspect the whole

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SERMON
XXII.

whole, and to reject these parts of error and designe which in themselves are so unhandsome alwayes, and sometimes criminal. He that shall observe the Church of Rome so implacably fierce for purgatory and the Popes supremacy, for clerical immunities, and the Superiority of the Ecclesiastical persons to secular, for indulgencies and precious and costly pardons, and then so full of devices to reconcile an evil life with heaven, requiring only contrition, even at the last for the abolition of eternal guilt; and having a thousand wayes to commute and take off the temporal; will see he hath reason to be jealous that interest is in these bigger then the religion, and yet that the danger of the soul is greater then that interest; and therefore the man is to do accordingly.

Here indeed is the great necessity that we should have the prudence and discretion, the *ὀφθαλμοὶ ὡς ὄφεις* of serpents,

ut cernamus acutum
Quam aut aquila aut serpens Epidaurius.

For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from contrition or a bruise, so also to safeguard themselves that they be not charmed with sweet and enticing words of false prophets, who charm not *wisely* but *cunningly*, leading aside *unstable souls*; against these we must stop our ears, or lend our attention, according to the foregoing measures and significations; but here also I am to insert two or three cautions.

1. We cannot expect that by these or any other signes we shall be enabled to discover concerning *all men* whether they teach an error or no. Neither can a man by these reprove a Lutheran, or a Zuinglian, a Dominican or a Franciscan, a Russian or a Greek, a Muscovite or a Georgian, because those that are certain signes of false teachers, do signifie such men who destroy an article of faith or a commandement; God was careful to secure us from death by removing the Lepers from the camp, and giving certain notices of distinction, and putting a term between the living and the dead: but he was not pleased to secure every man from innocent and harmless errors, from the mistakes of men, and the failings of mortality. The signes which can distinguish a living man from a dead, will not also distinguish a black man from a brown, or a pale from a white: It is enough that we decline those guides that lead us to hell, but not to think that we are inticed to death by the weakneses of every disagreeing brother.

2. In all discerning of sects, we must be careful to distinguish the faults of men from the evils of their doctrine; for some there are that say very well, and do very ill, *καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ λόγος καλὸς καὶ τὸ ἔργον κακόν*.

Multi Thyfigeros, paucos est cernere Bacchos: Many men of holy calling and holy religion that are of unholy lives; *homines ignava opera Philosophi*

A *Philosophâ sententiâ*: But these must be separated from the institution: and the evil of the men is onely to be noted, as that such persons be not taken to our single conduct, and personal ministry; I will be of the mans religion if it be good, though he be not; but I will not make him my confessor *non obsequi illi in autâ opib.* If he be not wise for himself, I will not sit down at his feet lest we mingle filthinesse instead of being cleansed and instructed.

B 3. Let us make one separation more, and then we may consider and act according to the premises. If we espie a designe or an evil mark upon one doctrine, let us divide it from the other that are not so spotted: for indeed the publick communions of men are at this day so ordered, that they are as fond of their errors as of their truths, and sometimes most zealous for what they have least reason to be so: and if we can by any arts of prudence separate from an evil proposition, and communicatè in all the good, then we may love colleges of religious persons, though we do not worship images, and we may obey our Prelates, though we do no injury to Princes, and we may be zealous against a crime, though we be not imperious over mens persons, and we may be diligent in the conduct of souls, though we be not rapacious of estates, and we may be moderate exactors of Obedience to humane laws, though we do not dispense with the breach of the divine; and the Clergy may represent their calling necessary, though their persons be full of modesty and humility, and we may preserve our lights and not lose our charity. For this is the meaning of the Apostle, *Try all things, and retain that which is good*: from every sect and community of Christians take any thing that is good, that advances holy religion, and the Divine honour; For one hath a better government, a second a better confession, a third hath excellent spiritual arts for the conduct of souls, a fourth hath fewer errors, and by what instrument soever a holy life is advantaged, use that though thou grindest thy spears and arrows at the forges of the Philistines; knowing thou hast no Master but Christ, no religion but the Christian, no rule but the Scriptures, and the laws and right reason, other things that are helps, are to be used accordingly.

E These are the general rules of Christian prudence which I have chosen to insist upon; there are many others more particular indeed, but yet worth not onely the enumerating, but observing also, and that they be reduced to practise. For the prudence of a Christian does oblige and direct respectively all the children of the institution; * that we be careful to decline a danger, * watchful against a temptation, * alwayes choosing that that is safe, and fitted to all circumstances, * that we be wise in choosing our company, * reserved and wary in our friendships, * and communicative in our charity, * that we be silent and retentive of what we hear, and what we think, * not credulous, * not unconstant, * that we be deliberate in our election * and

SERMON
XXII.

* and vigorous in our persecutions, * that we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our religion to God, and our eternal interest: for sometimes that which is counselled to us by *Christian prudence* is accounted folly by *humane prudence*; and so it is ever accounted when our duty leads us into a persecution. * Hither also appertain; that we never do a thing that we know we must repent of; * that we do not admire too many things; nor any thing too much; * that we be even in prosperity * and patient in adversity; but transported with neither into the regions of despair or levity, pusillanimity or Tyranny, dejection or Garishness, * alwayes to look upon the scar we have impressed upon our flesh, and no more to handle dangers and knives, * to abstain from ambitious and vexatious suits, * not to contend with a mighty man, * ever to listen to him (who according to the proverb) *hith four ears, Reason Religion, wisdom and experience*, * rather to lose a benefit then to suffer a detriment and an evil; * to stop the beginnings of evil; * to pardon and not to observe all the faults of friends or enemies; * of evils to choose the least, * and of goods to choose the greatest, if it be also safest; * not to be insolent in successe, but to proceed according to the probability of humane causes and contingencies; * ever to be thankful for benefits, * and profitable to others, and useful in all that we can, * to watch the seasons and circumstances of actions, * to do that willingly which cannot be avoided, lest the necessity serve anothers appetite, and it be lost to all our purposes, *Insignis enim est prudentia, ut quod non facere non possis, id facere ut libenter fecisse videaris*, * not to pursue difficult uncertain and obscure things with violence and passion. These if we observe we shall do advantage to our selves and to the religion, and avoid those evils which fools and unwary people suffer for nothing, dying or bleeding without cause and without pity. I end this with the saying of *Socrates* *σοφισμὸς καὶ ἀνδραγαθία ἀλλ' ἀνδραγαθία μὴ συνειρημένη τίς ἂν ἀνδρὶ ἀπονήσκει, καὶ τὸ σὺν δόξῃ ἀνδραγαθίζοντι τίς ἂν ἀνδρὶ ὠφελῇ*. * Vertue is but a shadow and a servile employment unless it be adorned and instructed with prudence which gives motion and conduct, spirits and vigorousnesse to religion. making it not only humane and reasonable, but Divine and celestial.

Plat. Phædon

Ser-



Sermon. XXIII.
OF
CHRISTIAN
SIMPLICITY.

Matthew 10. latter part of Ver. 16.

And harmlesse as doves.]



OUR Blessed Saviour having prefac'd concerning Prudence, addes to the integrity of the precept, and for the conduct of our religion, that we be simple as well as prudent, innocent as well as wary: harmlesse and safe together do well; for without this blessed union, prudence turns into craft, and simplicity degenerates into folly. *Prudens simplicitas*, is Martial's character of a good man: a wary and cautious innocence, a harmlesse providence, and provision: *Verà simplicitate bonus*, a true simplicity, is that which leaves to a man arms defensive; his castles and strong forts, but takes away his swords, and spears, or else his anger and his malice, his peevishnesse and spite. But such is the misery, and such is the iniquity of mankind, that craft hath invaded all the contracts and entercourses of men, and made simplicity so weak a thing, that it is grown into contempt, sometimes with, and sometimes without reason; *Et homi-*

SERMON
XXIII.

Orat. 21.

nes simplices, minime malos, the Romans called *parum cantos*, *ſepè ſtolidos*, unwary fools, and defenceleſſe people were called *ſimple*: and when the innocency of the old ſimple Romans in Junius Brutus time, in Fabritius, and Camillus began to degenerate, and to need the Aquilian law to force men to deal honeſtly, quickly the miſchief increaſed, till the Aquilian law grew as much out of power, as honeſty was out of countenance. And there, and every where elſe men thought they got a purchaſe, when they met with an honeſt man, and *ἡλίθιον* Aristotle calls *χρησόν*, and *ἡ βριλήν* & *ἡ μαγικόν*, *ἀπλόν*. A fool is a profitable perſon, and he that is ſimple is little better then mad: And ſo it is, when ſimplicity wants prudence. He that becauſe he means honeſtly himſelf, thinks every man elſe does ſo, and therefore is unwary in all, or any of his entercourſes, is a ſimple man in an evil ſenſe, and therefore Saint Gregory Nazianzen remarks Conſtantius with a note of folly, for ſuffering his eaſie nature to be abuſed by Georgius, *οικειῦται ἡ βασιλεὺς ἀπλότῃα, ὅπως ῥῆγῳ καλῶ ἡ κεφότης αἰδέμενος ἡ δολοφειά*. The Princes ſimplicity, ſo he calls it for reverence, but indeed it was folly, for it was zeal without knowledge: But it was a better temper, which he obſerved in his own father, *ἡ ἀπλότης καὶ τὸ ἥθος αἰδέλον*. ſuch a ſimplicity which onely wanted craft, or deceit, but wanted no prudence or caution, and that is truly *Chriſtian ſimplicity*, or the ſincerity of an honeſt, and ingenious, and a fearleſſe perſon; and it is a rare band, not onely of ſocieties, and contracts, but alſo of friendſhips, and advantages of mankind.

We do not live in an age in which there is ſo much need to bid men be wary, as to take care that they be innocent: Indeed in religion we are uſually too looſe, and ungirt, expoſing our ſelves to temptation, and others to offence, and our name to diſhonour, and the cauſe it ſelf to reproach, and we are open and ready to every evil but perſecution: from that we are cloſe enough, and that alone we call prudence; but in the matter of intereſt we are wary as ſerpents, ſubtil as foxes, vigilant as the birds of the night, rapacious as Kites, tenacious as grappling hooks and the weightieſt anchors, and above all, falſe and hypocritical as a thin cruſt of ice, ſpread upon the face of a deep, ſmooth, and diſſembling pit; if you ſet your foot, your foot ſlips, or the ice breaks, and you ſink into death, and are wound in a ſheet of water, deſcending into miſchief or your grave; ſuffering a great fall, or a ſudden death by our confidence and unſuſpecting foot. There is an univerſal cruſt of hypocriſie, that covers the face of the greateſt part of mankind. Their religion conſiſts in forms and outſides, and ſerves reputation or a deſigne, but does not ſerve God: Their promiſes are but fair language, and the civilities of the Piazzas or Exchanges, and diſband and unty like the air that beat upon their teeth, when they ſpeak the delicious and hopeful words. Their
oaths

- A oaths are snares to catch men, and make them confident: Their contracts are arts and stratagems to deceive, measured by profit and possibility; and every thing is lawfull that is gainfull; and their friendships are trades of getting; and their kindnesse of watching a dying friend, is but the office of a vulture, the gaping for a legacy, the spoil of the carcasle; and their sicknesses are many times policies of state, sometimes a designe to shew the riches of our bed-chamber; and their funerall tears are but the paranymphs and pious sollicitors of a second Bride; and every thing that is ugly must be hid, and every thing that is handsome must be seen, and that will make
- B a fair cover for a huge deformity; and therefore it is (as they think) necessary that men should alwayes have some pretences and forms, some faces of religion, or sweetnesse of language, confident affirmatives, or bold oaths, protracted treaties, or multitude of words, affected silence, or grave deportment, a good name, or a good cause, a fair relation, or a worthy calling, great power, or a pleasant wit; any thing that can be fair, or that can be usefull, any thing that can do good, or be thought good, we use it to abuse our brother, or promote our interests. *Leporina* resolved to die, being troubled for her husbands danger, and he resolved to die with her
- C that had so great a kindnesse for him, as not to out-live the best of her husbands fortune. It was agreed, and she temper'd the poyson, and drank the face of the unwholsome goblet, but the weighty poyson, sunk to the bottome, and the easie man drank it all off, and died, and the woman carried him forth to funerall, and after a little illness, which she soon recovered, she enter'd upon the inheritance and a second marriage.

Tuta frequensque via est —

- D This is an usual and a safe way to cozen, upon colour of friendship or religion, but that is hugely criminat; to tell a lie to abuse a mans belief, and by it to enter upon any thing of his possession, or his injury, is a perfect destruction of all humane society, the most ignoble of all humane follies, perfectly contrary to God, who is Truth it self, the greatest argument of a timorous and a base, a cowardly and a private minde, not at all honest, or confident to see the Sun, a vice fit for slaves; ἀνόντος ἡ δολοφονίας, as *Dio Crisostomus* calls it; ὁρᾶν ἢ ἐν θυλάκῳ τὰ δολοφάτα ἢ ἀπαρτίρα, τὰ ἐκείνα ἡ δόξα πᾶντων, μάλιστα ἢ ἑξαπτά; for the most timorous and the basest of beasts use craft, and lie in wait, and take their prey, and save their lives by deceit, and it is the greatest injury to the abused person in the world; for besides that it abuses his interest, it also makes him for ever insecure, and uneasie in his confidence, which is the period of cares, the rest of a mans spirit; it makes it necessary for a man to be jealous and suspicious, that is, to be troublesome to himself
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Disert. i. de
regno.

SERMON
XXIII.

C. n. Eth.

and every man else; and above all, lying, or craftinesse, and unfaithful usages, robs a man of the honour of his soul, making his understanding uselesse and in the condition of a fool; spoiled, and dishonoured, and despised: *Sic lux deus operatur & dicitur*: Said Plato, Every soul loses truth very unwillingly: Every man is so great a lover of truth, that if he hath it not, he loves to beleeve he hath, and would faine have all the world to beleeve as he does; either presuming that he hath truth, or else hating to be deceived, or to be esteemed a cheated and an abused person. *Non licet suffurari mentem hominis etiam Samaritani*, said R. Moses, *sed veritatem loquere atque age ingenuè*, if a man be a Samaritan, that is, a hated person, a person from whom you differ in matter of religion, yet steal not his minde away, but speak truth to him honestly and ingenuously. A mans soul loves to dwell in truth, it is his resting place; and if you take him from thence, you take him into strange regions, a place of banishment and dishonour. *Qui ignotus laedit, latro appellatur, qui amicos, paulo minus quam parricida*. He that hurts strangers is a thief, but he that hurts his friends is little better then a parricide: That's the brand and stigma of hypocrisie and lying: it hurts our friends, *mendacium in damnum potens*, and makes the man that owns it guilty of a crime, that is, to be punished by the sorrows usually suffered in the most execrable places of the cities; But I must reduce the duty to particulars, and discover the contrary vice, by the several parts of its proportion.

I. The first office of a Christian simplicity consists in our religion and manners: that they be open and honest, publike and justifiable, the same at home and abroad; for besides the ingenuity and honesty of this, there is an indispenfable, and infinite necessity it should be so, because whoever is a hypocrite in his religion, mocks God, presenting to him the outside, and reserving the inward for his enemy: which is either a denying God to be the searcher of our hearts, or else an open defiance of his omniscience, and of his justice: To provoke God that we may deceive men, to defie his Almightyesse, that we may abuse our brother, is to destroy all that is Sacred, all that is prudent, it is an open hostility to all things humane and divine, a breaking from all the bands of all relations, and uses God so cheaply, as if he were to be treated, or could be cozened like a weak man, and an undiscerning and easie merchant: But so is the life of many men:

*Vita fallax, abditosensus gerens,
Nimis que pulchram turpidus faciem induens.*

It is a crafty life that men live, carrying designs, and living upon secret purposes; *Pudor impudentem celat, audacem quies, pietas nefandum,*

A *nefundum, & era fallaces probant; simulantque milles dura.* Men pretend modesty, and under that red vail are bold against Superiours, saucy to their betters upon pretences of religion, invaders of others rights by false propositions in Theologie, pretending humility they challenge superiority above all orders of men, and for being thought more holy, think that they have title to governe the world; they bear upon their face great religion, and are impious in their relations, false to their trust, unfaithfull to their friend, unkind to their dependants; *ὄφους ἰμπεδόντες τὸ πρὸς ἄλλους συνήθους ἐν τοῖς ἀεικνείοις*, turning up the white of their eye, and seeking for reputation in the streets; so
B did some of the old hypocrites. the Gentile Pharisees. *Asperum cultum, & intonsum caput & negligentiores barbam & nitidum argento odium, & cubile humi positum, & quicquid aliud ambitionem viâ perversâ sequitur*: being the softest persons under an austere habit, the loosest livers under a contracted brow; under a pale face, having the reddest and most spritely livers; these kinde of men have abused all ages of the world, and all religions, it being so easie in nature, so prepared and ready for mischiefs, that men should creep into opportunities of devouring the flock upon pretence of defending them, and to raise their estates upon colour of saving their souls.

C *Introrsum turpes speciosi pelle decorâ.*
Men that are like painted sepulchres, entertainment for the eye, but images of death, chambers of rottenesse, and repositories of dead mens bones. It may sometimes concern a man to seem religious; Gods glory may be shewed by fair appearances, or the edification of our brother, or the reputation of a cause; but this is but sometimes; but it alwayes concerns us *that wee bee religious*, and we may reasonably think, that if the colours of religion so well do advantage to us, the substance and reality would do it much more. For no man can have a good by seeming religious, and
D another by not being so; the power of godlinesse never destroyes any well-built fabrick that was raised upon the reputation of religion, and its pretences: *Nunquam est peccare utile, quia semper est turpe*, said Cicero. It is never profitable to sin, because it is always base and dishonest: and if the face of religion could do a good turn, which the heart and substance does destroy, then religion it self were the greatest hypocrite in the world, and promises a blessing which it never can perform, but must be beholding to its enemy to verifie its promises. No. We shall be sure to feel the blessings of both the worlds, if wee serve in the offices of religion devoutly and charitably, before men and before God: if wee ask of
E GOD things honest in the sight of men, *καὶ ὁμοῦς οὐχ ὁμοῦς*. (as Pythagoras gave in precept) praying to God with a free heart and a publike prayer, and doing before men things that are truly pleasing to GOD, turning our heart outward, and our face inwards, that

SERMON
XXIII.

is, conversing with men as in the presence of GOD, and in our private towards God, being as holy and devout, as if we prayed in publike, and in the corners of the streets. Pliny praising of Ariston, gave him the title of an honest and hearty religion. *Ornat hunc magnitudo animi que nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert: recteque facti, non ex populi sermone mercedem, sed ex facto petit.* And this doth well state the question of a sincere religion, and an ingenuous goodnesse; It requires that we do nothing for ostentation, but every thing for conscience; and wee may be obliged in conscience to publish our manner of lives, but then it must be, not that we may have a popular noise for a reward, but that God may be glorified by our publike worshippings, and others edified by our good examples.

Neither doth the sincerity of our religion require that we should not conceal our sins, for he, that sins and dares to own them publickly, may become impudent: and so long as in modesty we desire our shame should be hid, and men to think better of us then we deserve, I say for no other reason, but either because wee would not derive the ill examples to others, or the shame to our selves, we are within the protection of one of vertues sisters, and we are not far from the gates of the kingdom of heaven; easie and apt to be invited in, and not very unworthy to enter.

But if any other principle draws the vail, if we conceal our vices because we would be honoured for sanctity, or because wee would not be hindered in our designs, we serve the interest of pride, and ambition, covetousnesse, or vanity; if an innocent purpose hides the ulcer, it does half heal it; but if it retires into the secrecy of sin and darknesse, it turns into a plague, and infects the heart, and it dies infallibly of a double exulceration. The Macedonian boy that kept the coal in his flesh, and would not shake his arm, lest hee should disturb the sacrifice, or discompose the ministry before Alexander the Great, concealed his pain to the honour of patience and religion. But the Spartan boy who suffered the little fox to eat his bowels rather then confesse his theft when he was in danger of discovery, payed the price of a bold hypocrisie; that is, the dissimulation reprobable in matter of manners, which conceals one sin to make way for another; *οι η̃ μαλα σμετοι η̃ σκυθρωποι τι̃ ε̃ξω, η̃ τι̃ δημωσα φαινόμενοι, ει̃ παρ̃ ο̃ αρχαι η̃ γυμνασιος λαβόντες δου̃ πύσιν;* Lucian notes it of his Philosophical hypocrites, dissemblers in matter of deportment and religion, they seem severe abroad, but they enter into the vaults of harlots, and are not ashamed to see a naked sin in the midst of its ugliness, and undressed circumstances. A mighty wraistler, that had won a crown at Olympus, for contending prosperously, was observed to turn his head and go forward, with his face upon his shoulder, to behold a faire woman that was present; and he lost the glory of his strength, when he became so weak, that a woman could turn his

A his head about, which his adversary could not. These are the follies and weaknesses of man, and dishonours to religion, when a man shall contend nobly, and do handsomly, and then be taken in a base or a dishonourable action; and mingle venome with his delicious ointment.

*Quid quod olet gravior mistum dia pasmate virus,
Atq; duplex anima longius exit odor.*

When Fescenia perfumed her breath that she might not smell of wine, she condemned the crime of drunkenness: but grew ridiculous when the wine broke thorow the cloud of a tender perfume, and the breath of a Lozenge; and that indeed is the reward of an hypocrite; his laborious arts of concealment furnish all the world with declamation and severity against the crime which himself condemns with his caution: But when his own sentence too is prepared against the day of his discovery,

*Notas ergo nimis fraudes, debreusq; furta
Jam tollas, & sis ebria simpliciter.*

A simple drunkard hath but one fault; But they that avoid discovery, that they may drink on without shame or restraint, adde hypocrisy to their vicious fulness: and for all the amazements of their consequent discovery, have no other recompence, but that they pleased themselves in the security of their crime, and their undeserved reputation: *Sic quæ nigrior est cadente moro; Cerussata sibi placet Lycoris*: for so the most easie and deformed woman, whose girdle no foolish young man will unloose, because she is blacker then the falling mulberry; may please her self under a skin of Cerusse, and call her self fairer then Pharaohs daughter, or the hinds living upon the snowy mountains.

One thing more there is to be added as an instance to the simplicity of religion, and that is, that we never deny our religion, or lie concerning our faith, nor tell our propositions, and articles deceitfully, nor instruct Novices or catechumens with fraud, but that when we teach them, we do it honestly, justly, and severely, not alwayes to speak all, but never to speak otherwise then it is, nor to hide a truth from them, whose souls are concerned in it, that it be known, *neque enim id est celare cum quid recte as, sed cum quid in se habet, id ignorare amolumentis tui causa velis eorum, quorum interest id scire*. So Cicero determines the ease of prudence and simplicity. The discovery of pious frauds, and the disclaiming of false but profitable and rich propositions; the quitting honours fraudulently gotten, and unjustly detained; the reducing every man to the perfect understanding of his own religion so far as can concern his duty, the disallowing false miracles, legends and fabulous stories, of cosening the people into awfulness, fear and superstition; these are parts of Christian simplicity which do integrate this duty: for religion hath strength enough of its own to support it self; it needs not a Devil for its advocate;

So Cicero lib.
3 offic.

it

SERMON
XXIII.

it is the breath of God, and as it is purer then the beams of the morning, so it is stronger then a tempest, or the combination of all the windes, though united by the prince that ruleth in the air: And we finde that the Nicene faith prevailed upon all the world, though some Arian Bishops went from Ariminum to Nice, and there decreed their own Articles, and called it, *the faith read at Nice*, and used all arts and all violence, and all lying, and all diligence to discountenance it, yet it could not be, it was the truth of God, and therefore it was stronger then all the gates of hell, then all the powers of darkness: and he that tells a lie for his religion, or goes about by fraud and imposture to gain profelytes, either dares not trust his cause, or dares not trust God. True religion is open in its articles, honest in its prosecutions, just in its conduct, innocent when it is accused, ignorant of falsehood, sure in its truth, simple in its sayings: and (as Julius Capitolinus said of the Emperour Verus) it is *morum simplicium & quæ adumbrare nihil possit: it covers indeed a multitude of sinnes* by curing them, and obtaining pardon for them, but it can dissemble nothing of it self, it cannot tell or do a lie: but it can become a sacrifice; a good man can quit his life, but never his integrity. That's the first duty; the sum of which is that which *Aquilinus* said concerning fraud and craft, *bona fides* the honesty of a mans faith and religion is destroyed *cum aliud simulatum aliud actum sit*, when either we conceal what we ought to publish, or do not act what we pretend.

2. Christian simplicity, or the innocence of prudence relates to laws both in their sanction and execution; that they be decreed with equity, and proportioned to the capacity and profit of the subjects, and that they be applied to practise with remissions, and reasonable interpretations agreeable to the sence of the words and the minde of the law-giver; but laws are not to be cosened and abused by contradictory glosses, and phantastick elusions, as knowing that if the majesty and sacrednesse of them be once abused, and subjected to contempt and unreasonable and easie resolutions, their girdle is unloosed, and they suffer the shame of prostitution and contempt. When Saul made a law, that he that eat before night should die, the people perswaded him directly to rescind it, in the case of Jonathan, because it was unequal and unjust, that he who had wrought their deliverance, and in that working it, was absent from the promulgation of the law, should suffer for breaking it, in a case of violent necessity, and of which hee heard nothing upon so fair and probable a cause: and it had been well that the Persian had been so rescued, who against the laws of his countrey killed a Lion to save the life of his Prince; in such cases it is fit the law be rescinded and dispensed with all, as to certain particulars, so it be done ingenuously with competent authority; in great necessity, and without partiality: But that which I intend here is, that in the rescission, or dispensation

A dispensation of the law the procelle be open and free, and such as shall preserve the law and its sacredness as well as the person and his interest. The laws of Sparta forbade any man to be twice Admiral, but when their affairs required it, they made Aræus utular and Lyfander fupravifor of him, and Admiral to all real and effective purposes: this wanted ingenuity and laid a way open for them to defpife the law which was made patient of fuch a weak evasion; The Lacedemonian Embaffador perfuaded Pericles to turn the tables of the law, which were forbidden to be removed, and another ordained in a certain cafe that the laws fhould fleep 24 hours; A third decreed that June fhould be called May, becaufe the time of an election appointed by the law was elapfed; thefe arts are againft the ingenuity and fimplicity of laws, and lawgivers; and teach the people to cheat in their obedience, when their Judges are fo fraudulent in the adminiftration of their laws. Every law fhould be made plain, open, honeft, and fignificant, and he that makes a decree and intricates it on purpofe, or by inconfideration, layes a fnares or leaves one there, and is either an imprudent perfon, and therefore unfit to govern, or elfe he is a Tyrant and a vultur. It is too much that a man can make a law by an arbitrary power; But

C when he fhall alfo leave the law fo that every of the minifters of Juftice and the Judges fhall have power to rule by a loofe, by an arbitrary, by a contradictory interpretation, it is intolerable. They that rule by prudence, fhould above all things fee that the patrons and Advocates of innocence fhould be harmleffe and without an evil fling.

3. Chriftian fimplicity relates to promifes and acts of grace and favour; and its caution is, that all promifes be fimple, ingenuous, agreeable to the intention of the promifer, truly and effectually expreffed, and never going leffe in the performance, then in the promife, and words of the expreffion: concerning which the cafes are feveral. 1. Firft all promifes in which a third or a fecond perfon hath no intereft, that is the promifes of kindneffe and civilities, are tied to paffe into performance, *fecundum equum & bonum*: and though they may oblige to fome fmall inconvenience, yet never to a great one: and I will vifit you to morrow morning, becaufe I promifed you, and therefore, I will come *etiamfi non concidero*, although I have not fleep my full fleep, but *fi febricitavero*, if I be in a fever or have reafon to fear one, I am difobliged. For the nature of fuch

E promifes bears upon them no bigger burthen, then can be expounded by reafonable civilities and the common expectation of kinde, and the ordinary performances of juft men, who doe excufe and are excufed refpectively, by all rules of reafon proportionably to fuch fmall enterecourfes: and therefore although fuch conditions be not expreffed in making promifes, yet to perform or refcind them by fuch laws is not againft Chriftian fimplicity. 2. Promifes

in

SERMON
XXIII.

in matters of justice, or in matters of grace as from a superiour to an inferiour must be so singly and ingenuously expressed, intended and performed accordingly, that no condition is to be reserved or supposed in them to warrant their non-performance, but impossibility, or that which is next to it, an intolerable inconvenience; in which cases we have a natural liberty to commute our promises, but so that we pay to the interested person a good, at least equal to that which we first promised. And to this purpose it may be added, that it is not against Christian simplicity to expresse our promises in such words which we know the interested man will understand to other purposes then I intend; so it be not lesse than I mean, then that he hopes for. When our Blessed Saviour told his disciples, that *they should sit upon twelve thrones*, they presently thought they had his bond for a kingdom, and dreamt of wealth, and honour, power and a splendid court; and Christ knew they did, but did not disintangle his promise from the enfolded and intricate sence of which his words were naturally capable; but he performed his promise, to better purposes, then they hoped for; they were presidents in the conduct of souls, Princes of Gods people, the chief in sufferings stood nearest to the crosse, had an elder brothers portion in the Kingdom of grace, were the founders of Churches, and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom, and ministers of the spirit of God, and chanel of mighty blessings, under-mediators in the Priesthood of their Lord, and *their names were written in heaven*; and this was infinitely better, then to groan and wake under a head pressed with a golden crown and pungent cares, and to eat alone, and to walk in a croud, and to be vexed with all the publike and many of the private evils of the people, which is the sum total of an earthly Kingdom.

When God promised to the obedient that they should live long in the land, which he would give them, he meant it of the land of Canaan; but yet reserved to himself the liberty of taking them quickly from that land and carrying them to a better. He that promises to lend me a staffe to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry me, hath not broken his promise, nor dealt deceitfully. And this is Gods dealing with mankind; he promises more then we could hope for; and when he hath done that, he gives us more then he hath promised. God hath promised to give to them that fear him all that they need, food and raiment; but he addes out of the treasures of his mercy; variety of food and changes of raiment; some to get strength, and some to refresh; something for them that are in health, and some for the sick. And though that skins of buls and staggas and foxes and bears could have drawn a vail thick enough to hide the apertures of sin and natural shame, and to defend us from heat and cold, yet when he addeth the fleeces of sheep and bevers, and the spoiles of silk worms, he hath proclaimed

A med that although his promises are the bounds of our certain expectation, yet they are not the limits of his loving kindnesse: and if he does more then he hath promised; no man can complain that he did otherwise, and did greater things then he said: thus God does, but therefore so also must we; imitating that example, and transcribing that copy of divine truth, alwayes remembering that his promises are yea and Amen. And although God oftengoes more, yet he never goes lesse; and therefore we must never go from our promises, unlesse we be thrust from thence by disability, or let go by leave, or called up higher by a greater intendment and increafe of kindnesse: And therefore when Solomon
B had sworn to Ibrahim-Bassa that he would never kill him so long as he were alive, he quitted himself but ill, when he sent an Eunuch to cut his throat when he slept, because the Priest told him that sleep was death. His act was false and deceitful as his great prophet.

But in this part of simplicity *we Christians* have a most especiall obligation, for our religion being ennobled by the most and the greatest promises, and our faith made confident by the veracity of our Lord, and his word made certain by miracles and prophecies, and voices from heaven, and all the testimony of God
C himself, and that truth it self is bound upon us by the efficacy of great endearments and so many precepts; if we shall suffer the faith of a Christian to be an instrument to deceive our brother, and that he must either be incredulous or deceived, uncharitable or deluded like a fool, we dishonour the sacrednesse of the institution and become strangers to the spirit of truth, and to the eternall word of God. Our blessed Lord would not have his disciples to swear at all (no not in publike Judicature) if the necessities of the world would permit him to be obeyed: If Christians will live according to the religion,
D the word of a Christian were sufficient instrument to give testimony and to make promises, to secure a faith, and upon that supposition oaths were uselesse, and therefore forbidden, because there could be no necessity to invoke Gods name in promises or affirmations if men were indeed Christians: and therefore in that case would be a taking it in vain; but because many are not, and they that are in name oftentimes are in nothing else, it became necessary that man should swear in judgement and in publike courts; but consider who it was
E that invented and made the necessity of oaths, of bonds, of securities, of statutes, extents, judgements and all the artifices of humane diffidence and dishonesty: These things were indeed found out by men; but the necessity of these was from him that is the father of lies, from him that hath made many faire promises, but never kept any, or if he did, it was to do a bigger

SERMON
XXIII.

bigger mischief, to cozen the more: for so does the Devil: He promises rich harvests, and blasts the corn in the spring, he tells his servants they shall be rich, and fills them with beggerly qualities, makes them base and indigent, greedy and penurious, and they that serve him intirely, as witches and such miserable persons never can be rich: if he promises health, then men grow confident and intemperate and do such things whereby they shall die the sooner, and die longer, they shall die eternally. He deceives men in their trust, and frustrates their hopes, and eludes their expectations; and his promises have a period set, beyond which they cannot be true; For wicked men shall enjoy a faire fortune but till their appointed time, and then it ends imperfect and most accomplished misery: and therefore even in this performance he deceives them most of all, promising and performing coloured stones, and glasse-gems, that he may cozen them of their glorious inheritance. All fraudulent breakers of promises dresse themselves by his glasse, whose best imagery is deformity and lies.



Ser-

Sermon XXIV.

Of Christian Simplicity.

Part II.

4. **C**hristian simplicity teaches opennesse, and ingenuity in Contracts, and matters of buying and selling, covenants, associations; and all such entercourses, which suppose an equality of persons as to the matter of right and justice in the stipulation, *μὴ τὸ ἀγορᾶν ἀλλ' ἀδελφῶν* was the old Attick law: and nothing is more contrary to Christian religion, then that the entercourses of justice be direct snares, and that we should deal with men, as men deal with foxes, and wolves, and vermin; do all violence, and when that cannot be, use all craft and every thing whereby they can bee made miserable.

ἢ δόλῳ ἢ βίῃ ἢ ἀμαρτῶν κερυθίζον.

There are men in the world who love to smile, but that smile is more dangerous then the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm in Adria; for their purpose is onely to deceive; they easily speak what they never mean, they heap up many arguments to perswade that to others, which themselves beleeeve not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts, they declaim against a thing which themselves covet, they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object which they would fain have to follow and overtake them, they excuse a person dexterously, where the man is beloved, and watch to surprize him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep. And these hypocrisies are so interwoven and imbroidered with their whole designe; that some nations refuse to contract till their arts are taken off by the society of

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banquets,

SERMON
XXIV.

banquets, and the good natured kindneses of festival chalices, for so Tacitus observes concerning the old Germans, [*De asciscendis principibus de pace & bello in consiliis consultant, tanquam nullo magis tempore ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad magnas incalescat*: as if then they were more simple when they were most valiant, and were least deceitfull, when they were least themselves.

But it is an evil condition that a mans honesty shall be owing to his wine, and vertue must live at the charge and will of a vice. The proper band of societies and contracts is, *justice and necessities, religion and the laws*; the measures of it are *equity, and our selves, and our own desires* in the dayes of our need, natural or forced; But the *instruments* of the exchange and conveyance of the whole entercourse is, *words and actions*, as they are expounded by custom, consent, or the understanding of the interested person; in which if simplicity be not severely preserved, it is impossible that humane society can subsist, but men shall be forced to snatch at what they have bought, and take securities that men swear truly, and exact an oath, that such is the meaning of the word, and no man shall think himself secure, but shall fear he is robbed if he has not possession first; and it shall bee disputed who shall trust the other, and neither of them shall have cause to bee confident upon bands, or oaths, or witnesses, or promises, or all the honour of men, or all the engagements of religion; *ἰδοὺ ὅτι ἐν τῇ ἀρετῇ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνισότης, ἰδοὺ αἱ πάντες ἀρεταὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἰσότητι, καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνισότης, ἰδοὺ αἱ πάντες ἀρεταὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἰσότητι* said Cyrus in Xenophon. A man though he desires it, cannot be confident of the man that pretends truth, yet tells a lie, and is deprehended to have made use of the sacred name of friendship, or religion, honesty, or reputation, to deceive his brother.

But because a man may be deceived by deeds and open actions as well as words; therefore it concerns their duty, that no man by an action on purpose done to make his brother believe a lie, abuse his perswasion and his interest. When *Pythius* the *Sicilian* had a minde to sell his garden to *Cannius*, hee invited him thither, and caused fishermen (as if by custome) to fish in the chanell, by which the gardens stood, and they threw a great store of fish into their harbours, and made *Cannius* believe it was so every day, and the man grew greedy of that place of pleasure, and gave *Pythius* a double price, and the next day perceived himself abused. Actions of pretence and simulation are like snares laid, into which the beasts fall though you pursue them not, but walk in the inquiry for their necessary provisions; and if a man fall into a snare that you have laid, it is no excuse to say, you did not tempt him thither: to lay a snare is against the ingenuity of a good man and a Christian, and from thence he ought to be drawn, and therefore it is not fit wee should place a danger which our selves are therefore bound to hinder, because

- A cause from thence we are obliged to rescue him: *Vir bonus est, qui prodest quibus potest, nocet nemini*, when we do all the good we can, and do an evil to no man, then onely we are accounted good men. But this pretence of an action signifying otherwise then it looks for, is onely forbidden in matter of contract, and the material interest of a second person. But when actions are of a double signification, or when a man is not abused or defeated of his right by an uncertain signe, it is lawfull to do a thing to other purposes then is commonly understood. Flight is a signe of fear; but it is lawfull to fly when a man fears not. Circumcision was the seal of the Jewish religion, and yet Saint Paul circumcised Timothy though he intended he should live like the Gentile Christians, and not as do the Jews. But because that rite did signifie more things besides that one; he onely did it to represent that he was no enemy of Moses law, but would use it when there was just reason, which was one part of the things which the using of circumcision could signifie: So our blessed Saviour pretended that he would passe forth beyond Emaus, but if he intended not to do it, yet he did no injury to the two disciples, for whose good it was that he intended to make this offer: and neither did he prevaricate the strictnesse of simplicity and sincerity, because they were persons with whom he had made no contracts, to whom he had passed no obligation, and in the nature of the thing it is *proper and naturall*, by an offer to give an occasion to another to do a good action; and in case it succeeds not, then to do what we intended not, and so the offer was conditional. But in all cases of bargaining, although the actions of themselves may receive naturally another sense, yet I am bound to follow that signification which may not abuse my brother, or pollute my own honesty, or snatch, or rille his interest: Because it can be no ingredient into the commutation, if I exchange a thing which he understands not, and is by error lead into this mistake, and I hold forth the fire, and delude him, and amuse his eye: for by me he is made worse.
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But secondly, as our actions must be of a sincere and determinate signification in contracts, so must our words: in which the rule of the old Roman honesty was this: *Uterque si ad eloquendum venerit non plus quam semel eloquatur*: Every one that speaks is to speak but *once*: that is, *but one thing*: because commonly that is truth: truth being but one: but error and falsehood infinitely various and changeable: and we shall seldom see a man so stiffned with impiety, as to speak little and seldome, and pertinaciously adhere to a single sense, and yet that at first, and all the way after shall be a lie. Men use to go about, when they tell a lie, and devise circumstances, and stand off at distance, and cast a cloud of words, and intricate the whole affair, and cozen themselves first, and then cozen their brother, while they have minced the case of conscience

SERMON
XXIV.

into little particles, and swallowed the lie by crumbs, so that no one passage of it should rush against the conscience, nor do hurt, untill it is all got into the belly, and unites in the effect; for by that time, two men are abused, the Merchant in his soul, and the Contractor in his interest; and this is the certain effect of much talking and little honesty: but he that means honestly, must speak but once, that is, one truth, and hath leave to vary within the degrees of just prices, and fair conditions, which because they have a latitude may be enlarged, or restrained according as the Merchant please, save onely he must never prevaricate the measures of equity, and the proportions of reputation, and the publike. But in all the parts of this traffick let our words be the significations of our thoughts, and our thoughts designe nothing, but the advantages of a permitted exchange. In this case, the severity is so great, so exact, and so without variety of case, that it is not lawful for a man to tell a *truth*, with a collateral designe to cozen and abuse; and therefore at no hand can it be permitted to lie or equivocate, to speak craftily, or to deceive by smoothnesse, or intricacy, or long discourses.

But this precept of simplicity in matter of contract hath one step of severity beyond this: In matter of contract it is not lawful so much as to conceal the secret and undiscernable faults of the merchandize; but we must acknowledge them, or else affix prices made diminute and lessened to such proportions and abatements as that fault should make. *Caveat emptor* is a good caution for him that buyes, and it secures the seller in publike Judicature, but not in court of conscience: and the old lawes of the Romans were as nice in this affair, as the conscience of a Christian. *Titus Claudius Centimalus* was commanded by the *Augures* to pull down his house in the *Calian mountain*, because it hindred their observation of the flight of birds: he exposes his house to sale, *Publius Calpurnius* buyes it, and is forced to pluck it down: But complaining to the Judges he had remedy, because *Claudius* did not tell him the true state of the inconvenience. He that sells a house infected with the plague, or haunted with evil spirits, sells that which is not worth such a price which it might be put to if it were in health and peace: and therefore cannot demand it but openly and upon publication of the evil. To which also this is to be added, that in some great faults and such as have danger, (as in the cases now specified) no diminution of the price is sufficient to make the Merchant just and sincere, unlesse he tels the appendant mischief: because to some persons in many cases, and to all persons in some cases, it is not at all valuable, and they would not possesse it if they might for nothing, *Marcus Gracidianus* bought a house of *Sergius Orata*, which himself had sold before; But because *Sergius* did not declare the appendant vassalage and service, he was recompensed by

AA. by the Judges; for although it was certain that *Gratiannus* knew it, because it had been his own, yet *Opertus ex bona fide denunciat* said the law; it concerned the ingenuity of a good man to have spoken it openly. In all cases it must be confessed in the price, or in the words. But when the evil may be personal, and more then matter of interest and money, it ought to be confessed, and then the goods prescribed, lest by my act I do my neighbour injury, and I receive profit by his damage. Certain it is, that ingenuity is the sweetest and easiest way, there is no difficulty or cases of conscience in that, and it can have no objection in it but that possibly sometimes we lose a little advantage, which it may be we may lawfully acquire, but still we secure a quiet conscience: and if the merchandise be not worth so much to me, then neither is it to him, if it be to him, it is also to me; and therefore I have no loss, no hurt to keep it if it be refused: but he that secures his own profit, and regards not the interest of another, is more greedy of a full purse then of a holy conscience, and prefers gain before justice, and the wealth of his private, before the necessity of publike society and commerce, being a son of earth, whose centre is it self, without relation to heaven that moves upon anothers point, and produces flowers for others, and sends influence upon all the world, and receives nothing in return but a cloud of perfume, or the smell of a fat sacrifice.

C. God sent justice into the world, that all conditions in their several proportions should be equall; and he that receives a good, should pay one: and he whom I serve is obliged to feed and to defend mee in the same proportions as I serve; and justice is a relative terme, and supposes two persons obliged, and though fortunes are unequal, and estates are in majority and subordination, and men are wise or foolish, honoured or despised; yet in the intercourse of justice GOD hath made that there is no difference, and therefore it was esteemed ignoble to dismiss a servant when corn was dear, in dangers of shipwrack to throw out an unprofitable boy and keep a fair horse; or for a wise man to snatch a plank from a drowning fool; or if the Master of the ship should challenge the board upon which his passenger swims for his life, or to obtrude false moneys upon others, which we first took for true, but at last discovered to be false; or not to discover the gold which the merchant told for alchimy: The reason of all these is, because the collateral advantages are not at all to be considered in matter of rights; and though I am dearest to my self, as my neighbour is to himself, yet it is necessary that I permit him to his own advantages, as I desire to be permitted to mine. Now therefore simplicity and ingenuity in all contracts is perfectly and exactly necessary, because its contrary destroys that equality which justice hath placed in the affairs of men, and makes all things private, and makes a man

SERMON
XXIV.

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dearer to himself, and to be preferred before Kings and Republics, and Churches; it destroys society, and it makes multitudes of men to be but like herds of beasts, without proper instruments of exchange, and securities of possession, without faith, and without propriety, concerning all which there is no other account to be given, but that the rewards of craft are but a little money, and a great deal of dishonour, and much suspicion, and proportionable scorn; watches and guards, spies and jealousies are his portion; But the crown of justice is a fair life, and a clear reputation, and an inheritance there where justice dwells since she left the earth, even in the kingdom of the just, who shall call us to judgement for every word, and render to every man according to his works; and what is the hope of the hypocrite though he hath gained, when the Lord taketh away his soul, *Tollendum esse ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium.* That's the sum of this rule: no falshood or deceit is to be endured in any contract.

5. Christian simplicity hath also its necessity, and passes obligation upon us towards enemies in questions of law or war. Plutarch commends Lyfander and Philopæmen for their craft and subtilty in war, but commends it not as an ornament to their manners, but that which had influence into prosperous events; just as Ammianus affirms, *nullo discrimine virtutis ac doli prosperos omnes laudari debere bellorum eventus*: whatsoever in war is prosperous, men use to commend: But hee that is a good souldier is not alwayes a good man. Callicratidas was a good man and followed the old way of downright hostility, *ἀπλῶς καὶ γενναίῳ καὶ ἀγέρῳ τρέπον*: But Lyfander was *πανουργός, σφίσις ἀπίστος, διαπορευόμενος καὶ οὐ πολέμιος*, a crafty man, full of plots, but not noble in the conduct of his Arms. I remember Euripides brings in Achilles commending the ingenuity of his breeding and the simplicity and nobleness of his own heart, *ἔγω δ' εἰς ἀνδρῶν εὐσεβέστερον ἡρώεσσι χέρον*—*ἡμιδον καὶ ἡρώεσσι ἀπλῶς ἔχον*. The good old man Chiron was my Tutor, and he taught me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners. It was well and noble; But yet some wise men do not condemn all souldiers that use to get victories by deceit: Saint Austin allows it to be lawful; and Saint Chrysostome commends it. These good men supposed that a crafty victory was better then a bloody war; and certainly so it is, if the power gotten by craft be not exercised in blood: But this businesse (as to the case of conscience) will quickly be determined. Enemies are no persons bound by contract and society, and therefore are not obliged to open hostilities, and ingenuous prosecutions of the warre; and if it be lawfull to take by violence, it is not unjust to take the same thing by craft. But this is so to be understood, that where there is an obligation, either by the law of Nations, or by special contracts, No man dare to violate his faith or honour, but in these things deal with an ingenuity equal to the truth of peace-
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A full promises, and acts of favour, and endearment to our relatives. Josephus tells of the sons of Herod, that in their enmities with their Uncle Pherora and Salome, they had disagreeing manners of prosecution, as they had disagreeing hearts; some railed openly, and thought their enmity the more honest, because it was not concealed, but by their ignorance, and rude untutor'd malice lay open to the close designs of the elder brood of foxes. In this, because it was a particular and private quarrel, there is no rule of conscience but that it be wholly laid aside, and appeased with charity; for the openness of the quarrel was but the rage and indiscretion of the malice: and the close designe was but the craft and advantage of the malice: But in just wars on that side where a competent authority and a just cause warrants the arms, and turns the active opposition into the excuse and licence of defence, there is no restraint upon the actions & words of men in the matter of sincerity, but that the laws of nations be strictly pursued and all parties; promises, and contracts observed religiously and by the proportion of a private and Christian ingenuity. Wee finde it by wise and good men mentioned with honour, that the Romans threw bread from the besieged Capitol into the stations of the Gauls, that they might think them full of corn: and that Agesilaus discouraged the enemies, by causing his own men to wear crowns in token of a Navall victory gotten by Pisander, who yet was at that time destroyed by Conon, and that Flaccus said the city was taken by Emilius, or that Joshua dissembled a flight at Ai, and the Consul Quinctius told aloud that the left wing of the enemies was fled, and that made the right wing fly; or that Valerius Levinus bragged prudently that he had killed Pyrrus, and that others use the Ensignes of enemies colours and garments, concerning which sort of actions and words, Agesilaus in Plutarch said, *ἡ δὲ ἀρετὴ τοῦ στρατοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλὰ καὶ τὸ μὴ ἰδοῦναι καὶ δαῖμον ἐν αὐτῷ*
 C *It is just and pleasant, profitable and glorious, but to call a parley and fall in upon the men that treat; to swear a peace and watch advantage; to entertain Heralds and then to torment them, to get from them notices of their party; these are such which are dishonourable and unjust, condemned by the laws of nations and essential justice, and by all the world; and the Hungarian Army was destroyed by a divine judgement, at the prayer & appeal of the Mahumetan enemy, for their violating their faith and honour, and prophaning the name of Christ, by using it in a solemn oath to deceive their enemies, τὸ μὴ ἀποδοῦναι τὸν ὅρκον, καὶ τὸ μὴ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπαρνηθῆναι: that is to despise God when men first swear by him, and then violate their oaths or leagues, their treaties or promises. In other cases liberty hath been taken by all men, and it is reproved by no man, since the first simplicity of fighting and down right blows did cease by the better instructed people of the world: which was, as is usually computed, about the end of the second Carthaginian war; since that time,*
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SERMON
XXIV.

some few persons have been found so noble as to scorn to steal a victory, but had rather have the glory of a sharp sword, then of a sharp wit. But their fighting gallantry is extrinsecal to the Question of lawful or unlawful.

6. Thus wee see how farre the laws of ingenuity and Christian simplicity have put fetters upon our words and actions; and directed them in the paths of truth and noblenesse, and the first degrees of permission of *simulation* is in the arts of War, and the cases of just hostility. But here it is usually inquired whether it be lawfull to tell a lie, or dissemble, to save a good mans life, or to do him a great benefit? A Question which Saint Austin was much troubled withall, affirming it to be of the greatest difficulty: for he saw generally all the Doctors before his time allowed it; and of all the Fathers no man is noted to have reprov'd it but Saint Austin alone, and he also (as his manner is) with some variety: those which followed him are to be accounted upon his score: and it relies upon such precedents which are not lightly to be disallowed: for so Abraham and Isaac told a lie in the case of their own danger to Abimelech; so did the Israelitish midwives to Pharaoh, and Rachab concerning the spies; and David to the King of Gath, and the Prophet that anointed Saul, and Elisha to Hazael, and Solomon in the sentence of the stolen childe; concerning which Irenaeus hath given us a rule, that those whose actions the Scripture hath remarked, and yet not chastised or censured, we are not without great reason and certain rule to condemn: but whether his rule can extend to this case is now to be enquired.

1. It is certain that children may be cozened into goodnesse, and sick men to health, and passengers in a storm into safety; and the reason of these is, because not onely the end is fair, and charitable, and just, but the means are such which do no injury to the persons which are to receive benefit: Because these are persons who are either naturally or accidentally ignorant and incompetent judges of affairs: and if they be also wilfull, as such persons most commonly are, there is in art and nature left no wayes to deal with them but with innocent, charitable, and artificial deceptions; they are not capable of reason, and solid discourses, and therefore either must be exposed to all harms, like Lions-whelps when their nurse and fire are taken in a toil, or else be provided for in wayes proportionable to their capacity.

2. Sinners may not be treated with the liberty we take to children and sick persons, because they must serve GOD with choice and election; and therefore although a sick man may bee cozened into his health, yet a man must not be cozened into his duty, which is no duty at all, or pleasing to God, unlesse it be voluntary and chosen: and therefore they are to be treated with arguments proper to move their wills, by the instrument of understanding specially, being

A being persons of perfect faculties, and apt to be moved by the ways of health and of a man. It is an argument of infirmity, that in some cases it is necessary to make pretences; but those pretences are not made legitimate, unless it be the infirmity of the interested man with whom we do comply. My infirmity cannot make it lawfull to make colours and images of things: But the infirmity of him with whom I deal, may be such, that he can be defended or instructed no other way: But sinners that offend God by choice must have their choice corrected, and their understandings instructed, or else their evil is not cured nor their state amended.

B 2. For it is here very observable, that in entercourses of this nature we are to regard a double duty; the matter of justice, and the rights of charity: that is, that good be done by lawful instruments; for it is certain it is not lawful to abuse a mans understanding, with a purpose to gain him 6. d. it is not fit to do evil for a good end, or to abuse one man to preserve or do advantage to another: and therefore it is not sufficient that I intend to do good to my neighbour; for I may not therefore tell a lie and abuse his credulity; because his understanding hath a right as certain as his will hath, or as his money; and his right to truth is no more to be cozened and defrauded, then his right unto his money; and therefore such artificial entercourses are no wayes to be permitted, but to such persons over whose understandings we have power and authority. Plato said it was lawful for Kings and Governours to dissemble, because there is great necessity for them so to do: but it was but crudely said, so nakedly to deliver the doctrine; for in such things which the people cannot understand and yet ought to obey, there is a liberty to use them as we use children, who are of no other condition or capacities then children; but in all things where they can and ought to choose, because their understanding is onely a servant to God, no man hath power to abuse their credulity and reason, to preserve their estates, and peace. But because Children and mad people and diseased, are such whose understandings are in minority and under Tuition, they are to be governed by their proper instruments and proportions; *το δὲ ἀγαθὸν καὶ ὀφέλιμον ἐστὶ τὸ ἀληθές* said Proclus, a good turn is to be preferred before a true saying, it is onely true to such persons who cannot value truth, and prefer an intellectual before a material interest. It is better for children to have warm clothes then a true proposition, and therefore in all senses they and their like may be so treated: But other persons who have distinct capacities have an injury done them by being abused into advantages; and although those advantages make them recompence, yet he that is tied to make a man recompence, hath done him injury and committed a sin, by which he was obliged to restitution; and therefore the man ought not to be cozened for his own good.

SERMON
XXIV.

4. And now upon the grounds of this discourse, we may more easily determine concerning saving the life of a man by telling a lie in judgement *Δεῖ μὲ συμπαράσχειν τοῖς φίλοις ἀλλὰ μέχρι θανάτου* said Pericles of Athens, when his friend desired him to swear on his side; I will assist my friend so far as I may not dishonour God, and to lie in judgement is directly against the being of government, the honour of Tribunals, and the commandement of God, and therefore by no accident can be hallowed; it is *καθ' αὐτὸ φαυλὸν καὶ ψευδὲς* as Aristotle said of a lie, it is a thing evil in it self, that is, it is evil in the whole kinde, ever since it came to be forbidden by God: and therefore all those instances of crafty and delusive answers which are recorded in scripture were extrajudiciall, and had not this load upon them to be a deceiving of authority in those things where they had right to command or inquire, & either were *before* or *besides* the commandment, *not at all against* it: and since the law of Moses forbid lying in judgement onely, by that law we are to judge of those actions in the old testament which were committed after its publication: and because in the sermons of the prophets and especially in the new testament, Christ hath superadded or enlarged the law of *ingenuity* & hearty *simplicity*, we are to leave the old scripture precedents upon the ground of their own permissions, and finish our duty by the rules of our religion: which hath so restrained our words, that they must alwayes be just and alwayes charitable, and there is no leave given to prevaricate, but to such persons where there can be no obligation, persons that have no right, such with whom no contract can be made; such as children and fools and infirm persons, whose faculties are hindred or depraved. I remember that Secundus extremely commends Arria for deluding her husbands fears concerning the death of his beloved boy, and wiped her eyes and came in confidently and sate by her husbands bed-side, and when she could no longer forbear to weep, her husbands sicknesse was excuse enough to legitimate that sorrow, or else she could retire; but so long she forbore to confess the boyes death till Cæcinnæ Pætus had so far recovered that he could go forth to see the boy, and need not fear with sorrow to return to his disease. It was indeed a great kindenesse and a rare prudence as their affaires and laws were ordered; but we have better means to cure our sick; our religion can charme the passion and enable the spirit to entertain and master a sorrow; and when we have such rare supplies out of the store-houses of reason and religion, we have lesse reason to use these arts and little devices, which are arguments of an infirmity as great as is the charity: and therefore we are to keep our selves strictly to the foregoing measures; *Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour, putting away lying, for we are members one of another: and be as harmlesse as doves* saith our Blessed Saviour in my text: which contain the whole duty concerning the matter of truth and sincerity; in both which places truth and simplicity are

Ephes. 4. 25.

A are founded upon justice and charity: and therefore where ever a lie is in any sence against justice, and wrongs any thing of a man, his judgement and his reason, his right or his liberty, it is expressly forbidden in the Christian Religion: what cases wee can truly suppose to be besides these, the law forbids not, and therefore it is lawfull to say that to my self which I believe not, for what innocent purpose I please; and to all those over whose understanding I have or ought to have right.

B These cases are intricate enough, and therefore I shall return plainly to presse the doctrine of simplicity which ought to be so sacred, that a man ought to do nothing indirectly which it is not lawfull to own; to receive no advantage by the sin of another, which I should account dishonest if the action were my own: for whatsoever disputes may be concerning the lawfulness of pretending craftily in some rare and contingent cases, yet it is on all hands condemned, that my craft should do injury to my brother. I remember that when some greedy and indigent people forged a Will of Lucius Minutius Basilus, and joyned M. Crassus, and Q. Hortensius in the inheritance, that their power for their own interest might secure the others share, they suspecting the thing to be a forgery, yet being not principles and actors in the contrivance *alieni facinoris munusculum non repudiaverunt*, refused not to receive a present made them by anothers crime; but so they entred upon a moiety of the estate, and the biggest share of the dishonour: we must not be crafty to anothers injury so much as by giving countenance to the wrong; for Tortoises and the Estrich hatch their egges with their looks onely; and some have signes which a dissembling face, or an acted gesture can produce; but as a man may commit adultery with his eye, so with his eye also he may tell a lie, and steal with one finger, and do injury collaterally, and yet designe it with a direct intuition upon which he looks with his face over his shoulder: and by whatsoever instrument my neighbour may be abused, by the same instrument.

C I sin if I do designe it antecedently, or fall upon it together with something else, or rejoyce in it when it is done.

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7. One thing more I am to adde, that it is not lawfull to tell a lie in jest. It was a vertue noted in Aristides, and Epaminondas, that they would not lie, *ἐν τῷ παιδιᾷ καὶ τῷ ᾄδει*, not in sport: and as Christian simplicity forbids all lying in matter of interest and serious rights: so there is an appendix to this precept forbidding to lie in mirth; for of every idle word a man shall speak hee shall give account in the day of judgement: and such are the jestings which S. Paul reckons amongst things uncomely; But amongst these; fables, apologues, parables, or figures of Rhetorick, and any artificial instrument of instruction, or innocent pleasure are not to be reckoned; But he that without any end of charity, or institution shall tell lies only to become ridiculous in himself, or mock another, hath set something upon his doomsday book,

E

SERMON
XXIV.

book which must be taken off, by water or by fire, that is, by repentance, or a judgement.

Nothing is easier then simplicity and ingenuity, it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities and the proper vertue of men, the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to men as nails and teeth to Lions, for nothing but to do mischief; it is a rare instrument of instruction, and a certain token of courage, the companion of goodnesse and a noble minde, the preserver of friendship, the band of society, the security of merchants, and the blessing of trades; it prevents infinite of quarrels, and appeals to Judges, and suffers none of the evils of jealousie: men by simplicity converse as do the Angels, they do their own work, and secure their proper interest, and serve the Publike, and do glory to God: But hypocrites, and liars, and dissemblers, spread darknesse over the face of affairs, and make men like the blinde, to walk softly and timorously: and crafty men like the close air suck that which is open, and devour its portion, and destroy its liberty; and it is the guise of devils, and the dishonour of the soul, and the canker of society, and the enemy of justice and truth, and peace, of wealth and honour, of courage and merchandise. He is a good man with whom a blind man may safely converse, *di- gnus quicum in tenebris vivit* to whom in respect of his fair treatings, the darknesse and light are both alike: But he that bears light upon the face, and a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an Angel of light, when he means to do most mischief. Remember this onely; that false colours laid upon the face besmeare the skin and dirty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it.

Apocal. 22. 15.

For without shall be dogs and forcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and *who so ever loveth and maketh a lie.*

Ser-



Sermon. XXV.

THE
MIRACLES
OF THE
DIVINE MERCY.

Psalm. 86. 5.

For thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee.



MAN having destroyed that which GOD delighted in, that is, the beauty of his soul, fell into an evil portion, and being seized upon by the Divine justice, grew miserable, and condemned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam being banished and undone, went and lived a sad life in the mountains of *India* and turned his face and his prayers towards Paradise; thither he sent his sight, to that place he directed his devotions; there was his heart now, and his felicity sometimes had been; but he knew not how to return thither, for God was his enemy, and by many of his Attributes opposed himself against him. *God's power* was armed against him; and poor man, whom a flie, or a fish could kill, was assaulted and

SERMON
XXV.

beaten with a sword of fire in the hand of a Cherubim. *Gods eye* A
watched him, his omniscience was mans accuser, his severity was
the Judge, his justice the executioner. It was a mighty calamity
 that man was to undergo, when hee that made him, armed himself
 against his creature, which would have died or turned to nothing,
 if hee had but withdrawn the miracles and the Almightyneffe of his
 power. If God had taken his arm from under him, man had pe-
 rished; but it was therefore a greater evil when God laid his arm
 upon him and against him, and seemed to support him that hee
 might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadneses God
 remembered his own creature, and pitied it, and by his *mercy* B
 rescued him from the hand of his power, and the sword of his justice,
 and the guilt of his punishment, and the disorder of his sinne, and
 placed him in that order of good things where hee ought to have
 stood. It was *mercy* that preserved the noblest of Gods creatures
 here below; he who stood condemned and undone under all the
 other Attributes of God, was onely saved and rescued by his *mer-*
cy: that it may be evident that *Gods mercy is above all his works,*
and above all ours, greater then the creation, and greater then our
 sinnes; *as is his Majesty, so is his mercy,* that is, without mea-
 sures, and without rules, sitting in heaven and filling all the world, C
 calling for a duty that he may give a blessing, making man that hee
 may save him, punishing him that he may preserve him: and Gods
justice bowed down to his *mercy*; and all his power passed into
mercy, and his *omniscience* converted into *care and watchfulnesse,*
into providence, and observation for mans avail, and Heaven gave
 its influence for man, and rained showers for our food and drink,
 and the Attributes and Acts of God *sat at the foot of mercy,* and all
 that *mercy* descended upon the head of man: For so the light of the
 world in the morning of the Creation was spread abroad like a cur-
 tain, and dwelt no where, but filled the *expansum* with a dissemi- D
 nation great as the unfoldings of the airs looser garment, or the
 wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combinati-
 on; but God gathered the beams in his hand, and united them in-
 to a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body
 of the Sun, and he lent some to his weaker sister that walks in the
 night, and guides a traveller and teaches him to distinguish a house
 from a river, or a rock from a plain field; so is the mercy of God;
 a vast *expansum* and a huge Ocean, from eternall ages it dwelt
 round about the throne of God, and it filled all that infinite di-
 stance and space, that hath no measures but the will of God; un- E
 till God desiring to communicate that excellency and make it re-
 lative, *created Angels,* that he might have persons capable of huge
 gifts, *and man,* who he knew would need forgiveness; for so the
 Angels our elder Brothers dwelt for ever in the house of their Fa-
 ther, and never broke his commandments; but we the younger
 like

A like prodigals, forsook our fathers house, and went into a strange country, and followed stranger courses, and spent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family, and came to need another portion: for ever since the fall of Adam, who like an unfortunate man spent all that a wretched man could need, or a happy man could have, *our life is repentance, and forgiveness is all our portion*: and though Angels were objects of Gods bounty, yet man only is (in proper speaking) the objects of his mercy. And the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confirmed to a little ring, and dwelt here below, and here shall dwell below, till it hath carried all Gods portion up to heaven, where it shall reigne and glory upon our crowned heads for ever and ever.

B But for him that considers Gods mercies, and dwells a while in that depth, it is hard not to talk wildly and without art, and order of discoursings: Saint Peter talked he knew not what, when he entred into a cloud with Jesus upon mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride upon the Northwinde, and passe between the Sun and us: And when we converse with a light greater then the Sun, and taste a sweetnesse more delicious then the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that atonement which reconciles God to man, and man to felicity, it will be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much, and say but little: and indeed we can best confesse the glories of the Lord by dazeled eyes and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity; For so these little drops that we ever, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could expresse the greatness of the show no otherwise, but by spilling, and inartificiall expressions and runnings over.

C But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the Ocean, and to span the measures of eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation, and experience, and all concerning Gods mercy as we do concerning God himself, that he is that great fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are refreshed. Gods mercy is all this, and we can only draw great lines of it, and reckon the epistollations of our hemisphere instead of telling the number of the stars we only can reckon what we feel, and what we live by; And though these be but very few of these lines of life enough to engage us forever to do Gods service, and to give him praises, yet it is certain, there are many operations of God upon us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel, nor see, nor understand as yet; but we are enabled by them, and are preserved and secured; and we shall then know them, when we come to give God thanks in the full time.

SERMON
XXV.

of an eternall sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider;

I. That mercy being an emanation of the Divine goodnesse upon us supposes us, and found us miserable; In this account concerning the mercies of God, I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the creation, or any thing of the nature of man; nor tell how great an endearment God passed upon us that he made us men, capable of felicity, apred with rare instruments of discourse, and reason, passions, and desires, notices of sense, and reflections upon that sense, that we have not the deformity of a Crocodile, nor the motion of a Worm, nor the hunger of a Wolf, nor the wildenesse of a Tigre, nor the birth of Vipers, nor the life of flies, nor the death of serpents.

Our excellent bodies, and usefull faculties, the upright motion, and the tenacious hand, the fair appetites, and proportioned satisfactions, our speech and our perceptions, our acts of life, the rare invention of letters, and the use of writing, and speaking at distance, the intervals of rest and labour, (either of which if they were perpetual would be intolerable) the needs of nature, and the provisions of providence, sleep, and businesse, refreshments of the body, and entertainment of the soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of bounty rather than mercy; God gave us these when he made us, and before we needed mercy; these were portions of our nature, or provided to supply our consequent necessities; but when we forfeited all Gods favour by our sins, then that they were continued, or restored to us, became a mercy, and therefore ought to be reckoned upon this new account; for it was a rare mercy that we were suffered to live at all, or that the Anger of God did permit to us one blessing; that he did punish us so gently: But when the *rack* is changed into an *ax*, and the *ax* into an *imprisonment*, and the *imprisonment* changed into an *enlargement*, and the *enlargement* into an *entertainment* in the family, and this *entertainment* passes on to an *adoption*, these are steps of a mighty favour, and perfect redemption from our sin: and the returning back our own goods is a *gift*, and a perfect donative, sweetned by the apprehensions of the calamity, from whence every lesser punishment began to free us; and thus it was, that God punished us and visited the sin of Adam upon his posterity. He threatned we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved; we waited for death and stood sentenced, and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasinesse; and every day is a new reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the Sun upon that day, and at last when we must die by the irreverfible decree, *that death is changed into a sleep*, and *that sleep is in the bosom of Christ*, and *there dwells all peace and security*, and it shall passe forth into *glories and felicities*. We looked for a *judge*, and behold a *Saviour*; we feared

A feared an *accuser*, and behold an *Advocate*; we sate down in sorrow, and rise in joy; we leaned upon Rhubarb and Aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian fig-trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed: But the Rhubarb proved medicinal, and the rough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings; and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of thornes, and bundles of thistles, the *Aconite*, and the *Briary*, the *Night-shade*, and the *Poppie*, and at the root of these grew the healing *Plantain*, which rising up into a talnesse, by the friendly invitation of a heavenly influence, turn'd about the tree of the *crasse*, and cured the wounds of the thornes, and the curse of the thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. *Si sic irascitur, quomodo concivatur?* If God be thus kinde when he is Angry, what is he when he feasts us with caresses of his more tender Kindenesse? All that God restored to us after the forfeiture of Adam grew to be a double Kindnesse; for it became the expresseion of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciounesse that was not to be altered, though we were, and that was it which we needed. That's the first generall: all the *bounties* of the creation became *mercies* to us, when God continued them to us and restored them after they were forfeit.

C 2. But as a circle begins every where, and ends no where, so do the mercies of God: after all this huge progresse, now it began anew: God is good and gracious, and God is ready to forgive. Now that he had once more made us capable of mercies God had what he desired, and what he could rejoyce in, something upon which he might pour forth his mercies; and by the way, this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art, when I speak of that which hath no measure) God made us capable of one sort of his mercies, and we made our selves capable of another: *God is good and gracious*, that is, desirous to give great gifts; and of this, God made us receptive; first by giving us naturall possibilities, that is, by giving those gifts he made us capable of more; and next, by restoring us to his favour, that he might not by our provocations be hindred from raining down his mercies. But *God is also ready to forgive*, and of this kinde of mercy we made our selves capable, even by not deserving it: Our sin made way for his grace, and our infirmities called upon his pity; and because we sinned, we became miserable, and because we were miserable, we became pitiable, and this opened the other treasure of his mercy: that because our sin abounded, his grace may superabound. In this method we must confine our thoughts;

E 1. Giving, *Thou Lord art good & plentiful in mercy, to all them that call*
2. Forgiving, *and ready to forgive, upon thee*
3. Gods mercies, or the mercies of his giving, came first upon
D d 3 us

SERMON
XXV.

Vide Serm. II.

Judges 13.

us by mending of our nature: For the ignorance we fell into is instructed and better learned in spirituall notices then Adams morning knowledge in Paradise, our appetites are made subordinate to the spirit, and the liberty of our wills is improved, having the liberty of the sons of God, and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage then we lost in Adam; and as man lost Paradise and got Heaven, so he lost the integrity of the first, and got the perfection of the second Adam: his living soul is changed into a quickning spirit; our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith, and our passions and desires are entertained with hope, and our election is sanctified with charity; and his first life of a temporall possession is passed into a better, a life of spirituall expectations; and though our first parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life. But I instance in two great things in which humane nature is greatly advanced, and passed on to greater perfections; The first is, that besides body and soul, which was the summe totall of Adams constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life; I mean, the spirit; so that now, man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the old man, that is, the old constitution is the least part, and in its proper operations is dead, or dying, but the new man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a Christian, and that is renewed in us day by day. But secondly, Humane nature is so highly exalted, and mended by that mercy which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when he did come, and actuate the purposes of this mission, and ascended up into heaven, he carried humane nature above the seats of Angels; to the place whither Lucifer the son of the morning aspir'd to ascend, but in his attempt fell into hell. For (so said the Prophet) the son of the morning said, I will ascend into heaven, and sit in the sides of the North, that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the East; called the sides, or obliquity of the North: and as the seating of his humane nature in that glorious seat brought to him all adoration, and the Majesty of God, and the greatest of his exaltation: So it was so great an advancement to us, that all the Angels of heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition: not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are lesse then Angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equall honour of being fellow-servants. This mystery is plain in Scripture, and the reall effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah the father of Samson saw an Angel, he worshipped him; and in the old Testament it was esteemed lawfull; for they were the lieutenants of God, sent with the impresses of his Majesty, and took in his Name the homage from us, who then were so much their inferiours. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the

Lord

A Lord of all the Angels, then they became our fellow servants, and might not receive worship from any of the servants of Jesus, especially from Prophets and Martyrs and those that are ministers of the testimony of Jesus. And therefore when an Angel appeared to Saint John, and he according to the Custom of the Jews fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing or not considering any thing to the contrary, the Angel reproved him, saying, *see thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God; or, as Saint Cyprian reads it, worship Jesus.* God and man are now onely capable of worship: but no Angel; God essentially; Man in the person of Christ, and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer; but Angels not so high, and therefore not capable of any religious worship: and this dignity of man Saint Gregory explicates fully. *Quid est quod ante Redemptoris adventum adorantur ab hominibus [Angeli] Et tunc, postmodum vero adorari refugiunt: why did the Angels of old receive vworshippings and vvere silent, but in the nevvy testament decline it and fear to accept it? Nisi quod naturam nostram quam prius despexerant, postquam hanc super se assumptam aspiciunt, prostratam sibi videri permescunt, nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere ausi sunt, quam super se, viz. in cæli Rege venerantur:* the reason is, because they seeing our nature vvhich they did so lightly value raised up above them, they fear to see humbled under them, neither do they any more despise the vveaknesse vvhich themselves vvorship in the King of heaven. The same also is the sense of the Glosse of Saint Ambrose, Anbertus, Haymo, Rupertus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late; which being so plainly consonant to the words of the Angel, and confirmed by the testimony of such men, I the rather note, that those who worship Angels and make religious addreses to them, may see what priviledge themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in his nature relative to us, is exalted far above all thrones and principalities and dominions. I need not adde lustre to this; It is like the Sun the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams; and there is not in nature or the advantages of honour any thing greater then that we have the issues of that mercy which makes us fellow-servants with Angels, too much honoured to pay them a religious worship, whose Lord is a man, and he that is their King is our Brother.

E 4. To this for the likenesse of the matter I adde, that the divine mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of his favours, that we are not onely fellow-ministers and servants with the Angels, and in our nature in the person of Christ exalted above them, but we also shall be their Judges; and if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there is in honour no degree, no priority of distances,

John Revel.
22. 9.
de bono patientia.

Homil. 8 in E.
vange.

SERMON
XXV.

1 Cor. 6. 3.

A of S. Iohn H
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distances, or characters of fame and noblenesse. Christ is the great Judge of all the world, his humane nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits, then shall the Devils, those Angels that fell from their first originals be brought in their chains from their dark prisons and once be allowed to see the light, that light that shall confound them; while all that follow the lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that resurrection shall be assessors in the judgement. Know ye not, (saith S. Paul) that ye shall judge Angels? And Tertullian speaking concerning Devils and accursed spirits [de cultu penitentie] saith, *Hi sunt Angeli quos iudicaturi sumus, Hi sunt Angeli quibus in levacro renuntiavimus.* Those Angels which we renounced in baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lords Glory, in the great day of recompences: And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of sentence that condemns the evil Angels shall also reward the good, and increase their glory: which because they derive from their Lord and ours, from their King and our elder Brother, the King of glories, whose glorious hands shall put the crown upon all our heads, we who shall be servants of that judgement and some way or other assist in it, have a part of that honour, to be Judges of all Angels, and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that nature that sits upon the throne of God, that reigns over Angels, that shall sit in judgement upon all the world. It is a great undecency that the son of a King should bear water upon his head, and dress vineyards among the slaves; or to see a wise man and the guide of his country drunk-drunk among the meanest of his servants; but when members of Christ shall be made members of an harlot, and that which rides above a rain-bow stoops to an impetuous whorish woman, when the soul that is fillet to the Lord of Angels, shall degenerate into the foolishnesse or rage of a beast, being drownded with the blood of the grape, or made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies, we shall but strip our selves of that robe of honour with which Christ hath invested, and adorned our nature, and carry that portion of humanity which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some capacities above Angels, into a portion of an eternall shame, and become less in all senses, and equally disgraced with Devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be, that we turned the glories of the Divine mercy into the basenesse of ingratitude, and the abatement of suffering the Divine vengeance. But I passe on.

The next order of Divine mercies that I shall remark is also an improvement of our nature or an appendage to it. For whereas our constitution is weak, our souls apt to diminution and impetuous faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookednesse, to stammering and sorrows, to hardness and

A and deformity to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness of spirit, God hath in his infinite mercy provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness to make recompence, and sometimes with an overrunning proportion for those naturall defects which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible and our conditions intolerable; God gives to blinde men better memories. For upon this account it is, that Rufinus makes mention of Didymus of Alexandria, who being blinde, was blessed with a rare attention and singular memory, and by prayer, and hearing, and meditating, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent Divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Machliniensis, who being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental blindness, and from thence continually grew to so quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory, that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen Rector of the College at Mechlin, and was made licentiate of Theology at Lovaine, and Doctor of both the laws, at Colein, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances; want of children he recompences with freedom from care, and whatsoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as the punishment of the sin of the man, or the instrument of his vertue, or his security, and is reckoned as a sufficient cure, or a sufficient Antidote. God hath laid a severe law upon all women that *in sorrow they shall bring forth children*, yet God hath so attempered that sorrow, that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow, and they have reason to rejoyce in that state, the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise, that *they shall be saved in bearing children*. He that wants one eye hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him; and when ever any man is afflicted with sorrow, his reason and his religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil, and persons that are obliged, run in to comfort him, and he may, if he will observe wisely, finde so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many designs of providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage and certain reserves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affaires, it often happens that *a single crosse is a double blessing*, and that even in a temporal sense *it is better to go to the house of mourning, then of joyes and festival egressions*. Is not the affliction of poverty better then the prosperity of a great and tempting fortune? does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and a low spirit; retired thoughts and under a sad roof? and is it not generally true, that sickness it self is appayed with religion and holy thoughts with pious resolutions and penitential prayers, with returns to God and

to

SERMON
XXV.

to sober counsels? and if this be true, that God sends sorrow to cure sin, and affliction be the hand-maid to grace, it is also certain that every sad contingency in nature is doubly recompensed with the advantages of religion, besides those intervening refreshments which support the spirit, and refresh its instruments. I shall need no instance but once more in this particular.

God hath sent no greater evil into the world, then that *in the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread*, and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls we shall *work out our salvation*. But see how in the first of these God hath out-done his own anger and defeated the purposes of his wrath by the inundation of his mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brows is so farre from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. It is not labour that makes the Garlick and the pulse, the Sycamore and the Cressies, the cheese of the Goats and the butter of the sheep to be savoury and pleasant; as the flesh of the Roe-buck or the milk of the Kine, the marrow of Oxen or the thighs of birds? If it were not for labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly nor be so healthful, nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble, nor so untempted, and as God hath made us *hatholding to labour* for the purchase of many good things, so *thetbing it self owrs labour*, many degrees of its worth and value: and therefore I need not reckon that besides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for labours. Nights to cure the sweat of the day, sleep to ease our watchfulness, rest to alleviate our burdens, and dayes of religion to procure our rest: and things are so ordered, that labour is become a duty, and an act of many vertues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as is its contrary, and is therefore necessary, not onely because we need it, for making provisions of our life, but even to ease the labour of our rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world then want of imployment, and an inactive life: and the lase man is not onely unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time, which yet passes over the active man like light, as a dream or the feathers of a bird, while the disemployed, is a disease, and like a long sleeplese night to himself, and a load unto his country: And therefore although in this particular God hath been so mercifull in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people, good and bad, who do not eat their bread in the sweat of their brows, yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the divine mercy; God did more for us then we did absolutely need; for he hath disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that mans affections are so reconciled to it, that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the Anger of God is ended in loving Kindness, and the

A the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine; and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spirituall interest with the labours of our spirit, seems to most men to be so intolerable, that rather then passe under it they quit their hopes of heaven, and passe into the portion of Devils; and what can there be to alleviate this sorrow, that a man shall be perpetually sollicitated with an impure tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a lust, and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared temptations, and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit, and hee must not desire what he cannot chuse but desire, and he must not enjoy whatsoeuer he does violently covet, and must never satisfie his appetite in the most violent importunities; but must therefore deny himself because to do so is extremely troublesome; this seems to be an art of torture, and a devise to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its intire constitution: For if it were not for this we had nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men or no man must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man in order to beatitude but *choice and election*, and nothing can enoble the *choice* but *love*; and nothing can exercise *love* but *difficulty*, and nothing can make that *difficulty* but the *contradiction of our appetite*, and the crossing of our naturall affections; and therefore when ever any of you is tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulance of temptation, you may be cured if you will please but to remember and rejoyce, that now you have something of your own to give to God; something that he will be pleased to accept, something that he hath given thee that thou mayest give to him: for our money and our time, our dayes of feasting, and our dayes of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, our worshippings and prostrations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the summe of our religion, are onely accepted according as they bear along with their portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty.

E *Letum est quoties magno tibi constat honestum.*

So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things such as we call vertue and vice, reward and punishment, and

S E R M O N
XXV.

and if he will not suffer God to distinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter; and his portion shall be blacknesse without varietie; and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of *divine mercy*, we are to account that not onely in nature; but in contingency and emergent events of providence, God makes compensation to us, for all the evils of chance, and hostilities of accident, and *brings good out of evil*, which is that soldem triumph which mercy makes over justice, when it rides upon a cloud and crowns its darknesse with a robe of glorious light. God indeed suffered Joseph to be sold a bond-slave into Egypt, but then it was that GOD intended to crown and reward his chastity; for by that means he brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention and he was a conquerour: Then God sent him to prison, but still that was *warer*, it was to make way to bring him to Pharaohs court; and God brought famine upon Canaan, and troubled all the souls of Jacobs family, and there was a plot laid for another mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Josephs glory: and then GOD brought a great evil upon their posterity and they groaned under task-masters, but this God changed into *the miracles of his mercy*, and suffered them to bee afflicted that hee might do ten miracles for their sakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest treason that ever was committed; the redemption of the world from the fact of Judas, God loving to defeat the malice of man, and the arts of the Devil, by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy? It is a sad calamity to see a kingdom spoiled, and a Church afflicted, the Priests slain with the sword, and the blood of Nobles mingled with cheaper sand, religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted, Government confounded, and Laws ashamed, Judges decreeing causes in fear and covetousnesse, and the ministers of holy things, setting themselves against all that is sacred, and setting fire upon the fields, and turning in little foxes on purpose to destroy the vineyards; and what shall make recompence for this heap of sorrows, when ever God shall send such swords of fire? even *the mercies of God*, which then will be made publike, when we shall hear such afflicted people sing *In convertendo captivitatem Sion* with the voyce of joy and festival Eucharist, *among such as keep holy day*; and when peace shall become sweeter and dwell the longer; and in the meantime it serves religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and GOD shall crown them, and men shall grow wiser, and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take sanctuary in holy living, and be taught temperance by their want, and patience by their suffering, and charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the duty of their relations, and at last the

A the secret worm that lay at the root of the plant, shall be drawn forth and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant Vine swell into irregular twigs, and bold excrescencies, and spend it self in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine-presse, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage: But when the Lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant and made it bleed, it grew intemperate in its vain expense of uselesse leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that losse of blood by the return of fruit: So is an afflicted Province, cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonnesse, and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joyes of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staffe, and his anger into mercy.

C Had not David suffered more if he had suffered lesse, and had he not been miserable unlesse he had been afflicted? he understood it well when he said, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* He that was rivall to *Cressus*, when he stood candidate to command the Legions in the *Parthians* warre was much troubled that he missed the dignity, but he saw himself blessed that he scaped the death, and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the sad news arrived at Rome. The Gentleman at *Marseilles* cursed his starres that he was absent when the ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a winde, and missed it; but he gave thanks to the providence that blest him with the crosse, when he knew that the ship perished in the voyage, and all the men were drowned: And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem, that longed to become glad mothers, and for want of children would not be comforted, yet when Titus sacked the City, found the words of Jesus true, *Blessed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck.* And the world being governed with a rare variety, and changes of accidents, and providence; that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a blessing bigger then we hoped for, then when we were angry with God for hindring us, to perish in pleasant wayes, or when he was contriving to pour upon thy head a mighty blessing. Do not think the Judge condemns you when he chides you, nor think to read thy own finall sentence by the first half of his words; *Stand still* and see how it will be in the whole event of things; let God speak his minde out; for it may be, this sad beginning is but arrant to bring in, or to make thee to esteem, and entertain, and understand the blessing.

SERMON
XXV.

They that love to talk of the mercies of the Lord, and to recount his good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by such Appellatives which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: He is the Father of the fatherless, and an avenger of the widows cause, he stands at the right hand of the poor to save his soul from unrighteous Judges, and he is with us in tribulation: And upon this ground, let us account whether mercy be not the greater ingredient in that death and deprivation, when I lose a man and get God to be my Father; and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean upon him, and become my Patron and my Guide, my Advocate and Defender: and if in our greatest misery Gods mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose him to be in the endearment of his loving Kindness? If his vail be so transparent, well may we know that upon his face dwells glory, and from his eyes light, and perpetual comforts run in channels, larger then the returns of the Sea, when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course, by the violence of a tempest from the North. The summe is this, God intends every accident should minister to vertue, and every vertue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the Divine goodness, and therefore, if our sorrows do not pale into comforts, it is besides Gods intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that mercy which would save us by all means, and all varieties, by health and by sickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we choose, and by what we fear; that as Gods providence rules over all chances of things, and all designs of men, so his mercy may rule over all his providence.

Ser-

Sermon XXVI.

The Miracles of the Divine Mercy.

Part II.

7. **G**OD having by these means secured us from the evils of nature and contingencies, he represents himself to be our Father, which is the great *endearment*, and *eye*, and *expression*, of a *naturall*, *unalterable*, and *essentiall* *kindnesse*, he next makes provisions for us to supply all those necessities which himself hath made, For even to *make necessities*, was a great circumstance of the mercy, and all the relishes of wine, and the savouriness of meat, the sweet and the fat, the pleasure and the satisfaction, the restitution of spirits, and the strengthening of the heart, are not owing to the liver of the vine, or the *kidneys* of wheat, to the blood of the grape, or the strength of the corne, but to the appetite, or the necessity; and therefore it is, that he that sits at a full table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of natures intervals, he loses the blessing of his daily bread, and leans upon his table as a sick man upon his bed, or the lion in the grasse, which he cannot feed on; but he that wants it, and sits down when nature gives the signe, rejoyces in the health of his hunger, and the taste of his meat, and the strengthening of his spirit, and gives God thanks while his bones and his flesh rejoyce in the provisions of nature, and the blessing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy, and the decays of old age, the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections upon their acts of sense? and when *desire failes*, presently the mourners go about the streets. But then, that those desires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordi-

Eccles. 18.

SERMON
XXVI.

nary and extraordinary, by foresight and contingency, according to necessity, and up unto conveniency, untill we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger then the Bow in the clouds, and richer then the trees of *Eden*, which were permitted to feed our miserable father: Is not all the earth our orchard, and our granary, our vineyard, and our garden of pleasure? and the face of the Sea is our traffique, and the bowels of the Sea is our *vivarium*, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendant needs; and all the face of heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitfull showers and fair refreshments; and when God made provisions for his other creatures, he gave it of one kinde, and with variety no greater, then the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or sitting down with his draught of blood, or walking upon his portion of grasse: But man hath all the food of beasts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food; and the food of *Angels*, and the dew of heaven, and the fannesse of the earth; and every part of his body hath a provision made for it, and the smoothnesse of the olive, and the juice of the vine refresh the heart and make the face cheerfull, and serve the ends of joy, and the festivity of man, and are not onely to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appease a passion, and allay a sorrow. It is an infinite variety of meat with which God furnishes out the table of mankind; and in the covering our sin, and cloathing our nakednesse, God passed from fig-leaves to the skins of beasts, from aprons to long-ropes, from leather to wooll, and from thence to the warmth of fures, and the coolnesse of silks, he hath dressed not onely our needs, but hath fitted the severall portions of the yeer, and made us to go dressed like our mother; leaving off the winter fables, when the florid spring appears, and as soon as the Tulip fades we put on the robe of Summer, and then shear our sheep for Winter; and God uses us as Joseph did his brother *Benjamin*, we have many changes of raiment, and our messe is five times bigger then the provision made for our brothers of the Creation. But the providence and mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God, running over the tables of the rich, God hath also made provisions for the poorest person: so that if they can but rule their desires, they shall have their tables furnished; and this is secured and provided for by one promise and two duties, by our *Own labour*, and our *Brothers charity*: and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women of the world provided for, and fed and clothed till they die? and was it not alwayes so from the first morning of the creatures? and that a man is starved to death, is a violence and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldom as for a man to have but one eye: and

A and if our being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdom, and admire the mercies of our Almighty Father. But these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that GOD hath made such strange provisions for our health? such infinite differences of Plants, and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by meer chance, or by inspiration? either of which is the miracle of providence, secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the Divine Mercy, that discovered to man the secrets of Spagyrick medicines, of stones, of spirits, and the results of 7. or 8. decoctions, and the strange effects of accidentall mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the secret sanctuary of hidden causes, and secret natures, and being laid open by the concurrence of 20 or 30 little accidents, all which were ordered by God, as certainly as are the first principles of nature, or the descent of sons from fathers in the most noble families.

B But that which I shall observe in this whole affair is, that there are both for the provision of our tables, and the relief of our sicknesses, so many miracles of providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation wee bear to heaven: and the poor man need not bee troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the Sunne is up: for he hath found to this day he was not deceived, & then he may rejoice, because he sees by an effective probation, that in heaven a decree was made, every day to send him provisions of meat and drink; and that is a mighty mercy, when the circles of heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosome of care, and nourishment, and the wisdom of God is daily busied to serve his mercy, as his mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there where the diseases are most popular, and every Countrey is best provided against its own evils? Is not the Rhubarb found where the Sunne most corrupts the liver, and the Scabious by the shore of the Sea, that God might cure as soon as he wounds, and the inhabitants may see their remedy against the leprosie, and the scurvie, before they feel their sickness? And then to this we may add, Natures common and open fields, the shores of rivers, and the strand of the Sea, the unconfin'd air, the wilderness that hath no hedge, and that in there every man may hunt, and fowl, and fish respectively; and that God sends some miracles and extraordinary blessings for the publique good, that he will not endure they should be inclosed and made severall: Thus he is pleased to dispense the *Manna of CALDEE*, the Medicinall waters of *Germany*, the *Mistles at SUZE* at this day, and the Egyptian Beans in the Marishes of *Albania*, and the salt of *TROUS* of old; which God to defeat the covetousness of man, and to spread his mercy over the face of the indigent, as the Sun scatters his beams over the bosome of the whole earth, did so order that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosome of heaven was open;

SERMON
XXVI.

but when man gathered them into single handfulls and made them improprieate, God gathered his hand into his bosome, and bound the heavens with ribs of brasse, and the earth with decrees of iron, and the blessing reverted to him that gave it, since they might not receive it, to whom it was sent. And in generall, this is the excellency of this mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied, and secured by a promise which God cannot break, but he that cannot break the laws of his own promises, can break the laws of nature, that he may performe his promise, and he will do a miracle rather then forsake thee in thy needs: So that our security and the relative mercy, is bound upon us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God, that he hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if GOD is so mercifull in making fair provisions for our lesse noble part, in order to the transition toward our Countrey, we may expect that the mercies of God hath rare arts to secure to us his designed bounty, in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite mercy of the Almighty Father of mercies that he hath appointed to us such a religion that leads us to a huge felicity, through pleasant wayes. For the felicity that is designed to us is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while wee are so ignorant as not to understand it, we are also so foolish as not to desire it with passions great enough to performe the little conditions of its purchase; GOD therefore knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we would be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our salvation upon us by the endearment of temporall prosperities; and because we love this world so well, GOD hath so ordered it, that even this world may secure the other. And of this, GOD in old time made open profession, for when he had secretly designed to bring his people to a glorious immortality in another world, hee told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger then the capacity of their thoughts, or of their Theology, but told them that which would tempt them most, and endear obedience: *If you will obey, yee shall eat the good things of the land:* Yee shall possesse a rich countrey, yee shall triumph over your enemies, ye shall have numerous families, blessed children, rich granaries, over-running wine-presses; for God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear, between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and see, it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whither before they come they must die, and lose all desire and all capacities of enjoyment. But this designe of GOD which was bare-faced in the dayes of the Law, is now

A now in the Gospel inter-woven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of faith and reason) into every vertue , and temporall advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every Christian grace, for so the richest tissue dazles the beholders eye when the Sun reflects upon the mettall, the silver and the gold weaved into phantastick imagery , or a wealthy plainnesse, but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought upon cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies: so is the imbroidery of our vertue; the glories of the spirit dwell upon the face and vestment, upon the fringes and the borders; and there we see the Beril and the Onyx, the Jasper and the Sardyx, order and perfection, love, and peace, and joy, mortification of the passions, and ravishment of the will, adherencies to God, and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Ghost, and longings after heaven, humility, and chastity, temperance, and sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the cloaths of the soul that it may not bee found naked in the day of the Lords vilitation; but thorow these rich materials a thrid of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoyce: they are wrought upon secular content, and materiall satisfactions, and now we cannot be happy unlesse we be pious, and the religion of a Christian is the greatest security, and the most certain instrument of making a man *rich*, and *pleased*, and *healthfull*, and *wise*, and *beloved* in the whole world. I shall now remark onely two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have other-where represented.

Life of H. Jesus, part 3.
Disc. 14.

1. The whole religion of a Christian as it relates to others is nothing but justice and mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit: and upon this supposition what evil can come to a just and a mercifull, to a necessary and usefull person? For the first permission of evil was upon the stock of injustice: Hee that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another mans right, must venture the losse of his own; and when I put my Brother to his defence, he may chance drive the evil so farre from himself, that it may reach me; Laws and Judges, private and publicke Judicatures, wars and tribunalls, axes and wheels were made, not for the righteous, but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useles, if men did do as they would willingly suffer.

2. And because there is no evil that can befall a just man unlesse it comes by *injury* and *violence*, our Religion hath also made as good provisions against that too, as the nature of the thing will suffer; for by patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by hope and faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the minde, the envy and

SERMON
XXVI.

and, the freshfulnesse that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man; and when we turn all the passion into charity, and God turns all the suffering into reward, there remains nothing that is very formidable. So that our religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men; (and in our religion no man can suffer as a malefactor, if he follows the religion truly) and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the graces of this discipline turn them into vertues and rewards; and make them that in their event they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3. But then when we consider that the religion of a Christian consists in doing good to all men, that it is made up of mercies and friendships, of friendly conventions and assemblies of Saints, that all are to *do good works for necessary uses*, that is, to be able to be beneficiall to the publike, and not to be burthensome to any, where it can be avoided, what can be wished to man in relation to others, and what can bee more beneficiall to themselves, then that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the publike does need, such whom Princes and Nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their severall conditions; that they are so well provided for, that unlesse a persecution disables them, they cannot onely maintain themselves, but oblige others to their charity.

This is a temporall good which all wise men reckon as part of that felicity which recompences all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbour-hood and amity where men are most valued and most secure. 4. To this we may adde this materiall consideration. That all those graces which oblige us to do good to others are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to our selves. It is a huge noblenesse of charity to give alms, not onely to our Brother, but for him. It is the Christian sacrifice, like that of Job, who made oblations for his sounes when they feasted each other, fearing lest they had sinned against GOD; and if I give almes, and fast and pray in behalf of my Prince, or my Patron, my friend, or my children, I do a combination of holy actions, which are of all things that I can do, the most effectuall intercession for him, whom I so recommend; but then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the Divine Mercy to secure blessing to our selves. That I am a person fit to intercede and pray for him must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept; so that before I bee fit to pray and interpose for him; I must first become dear to God, and my charity can do him no good, for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to GOD, that so he may the rather hear me; and when I fast, it is first an act of repentance for my self before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my Brother a single benefit, by doing my self

A self a double one, and it is also so ordered, that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then he will hear me for my self though I say nothing in my own behalf, and our prayers are like Jonathans arrows, if they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for, and I have not onely the comfort of rejoycing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy; and certain it is that the charitable prayer for another, can never want what it asks, or instead of it, a greater blessing. The good man that saw his poor brother troubled because he had nothing to present for an offering at the Holy communion (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindnesse for Christs poor members with which themselves were incorporated with so mysterious union) and gave him money that he might present for the good of his soul as other Christians did, had not onely the reward of almes but of religion too; and that offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two souls; for as I sin when I make another sin: so if I help him to do a good, I am sharer in the gains of that talent, and he shall not have the lesse, but I shall be rewarded upon his stock. And this was it which David rejoyced in, *Particeps sum omnium timensium te*; I am a partner, a companion of all them that fear thee, I share in their profits. If I do but rejoyce at every grace of God which I see in my Brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace; and we need not envy the excellency of another; It becomes mine as well as his: and if I do rejoyce, I shall have cause to rejoyce; so excellent, so full, so artificiall is the mercy of God in making and seeking and finding all occasions to do us good. 5. The very charity and love and mercy that is commanded in our religion is in it self a great excellency, not onely in order to heaven, but to the comforts of the earth too, and such without which a man is not capable of a blessing or a comfort; and he that sent charity and friendships into the world, intended charity to be as relative as justice, and to do its effect both upon the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a blessing to a kinde Father, when his children do well, and every degree of prudent love which he bears to them is an endearment of his joy; and he that loves them not, but looks upon them as burdens of necessity, and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoycings, and the pleasures of kindnesse, which they feast withall who love to divide their fortunes amongst them, because they have already divided our large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in this relation; but it is true in all the excellency of friendship; and every man rejoyces twice when he hath a partner of his joy; A friend shares my sorrow and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy and makes it double. For so two chanel divide the river and lessen it into rivulets, and make it foordable and apt to be drunk up at the first
revels

SERMON
XXVI.

revels of the Sirian star; but two torches doe not divide but increase the flame; and though my tears are the sooner dried up, when they run upon my friends cheeks in the furrows of compassion, yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories and make them radiant like the golden Candle-sticks that burn before the throne of God, because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now upon this account which is already so great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral issues, and little streams of comfort which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us; such as are *mutual comforts*, *visiting sick people*, *instructing the ignorant*, and so becoming better *instructed* and *fortified* and *comforted* our selves by the instruments of our brothers ease and advantages; *the glories of converting souls*, *of rescuing a sinner from hell*, of a miserable man from the grave, *the honour and noblenesse of being a good man*, the noble confidence, and the bravery of innocence, the ease of patience, the quiet of contentednesse, the rest of peacefulnesse, the worthinesse of forgiving others, the greatnesse of spirit that is in despising riches, and the sweetnesse of spirit that is in meeknesse and humility; these are Christian *graces* in every sense; favours of God and issues of his bounty and his mercy; but all that I shall now observe further concerning them, is this, that God hath made these necessary; he hath obliged us to have them under pain of damnation, he hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world, that if we will not, he hath threatened to destroy us, which is, not a desire or aptnesse to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it that we cannot perish, unlesse we desire it our selves, and unlesse we will do our selves a mischief on purpose to get hell, we are secured of heaven, and there is not in the nature of things, any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity upon creatures that can choose, then to make that which they should naturally choose, be spiritually their duty, and that he will make them happy hereafter, if they will suffer him to make them happy here; But hard by stand another throng of mercies that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them, for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this felicity.

9. God, that he might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chaines, and bound us not onely with the bracelets of love, and the deliciousnesse of hope, but with the ruder cords of fear and reverence, even with all the innumerable parts of a *restraining grace*. For it is a huge aggravation of humane calamity to consider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of his Religion, and knows it to be the way of honour and felicity, and that to prevaricate his holy functions is certain death and disgrace to eternall ages, yet

A yet that some men shall despise their religion; others shall be very wary of its laws, and call the commandments a burden, and too many; with a perfect choice shall delight in death, and the wayes that lead thither, and they choose many infinitely, and to rule over their Brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they desire, and love it fondly and be restless in all things but where they perish; if God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous and mercifull grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the deluge of sin universally as the old world did in that storm of the divine anger, *the flood of waters*. But thus God suffers but few adulteries in the world in respect of what would be if all men that desire to be adulterers had power and opportunity; and yet some men and very many women are by modesty and natural shamesfacednesse chastised in their too forward appetites. or the laws of man, or publick reputation, or the undecency, and unhandsome circumstances of sin check the desire and make it that it cannot arrive at act: for so have I seen a buisie flame sitting upon a sullen cole turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbour-hood and reach at a heap of prepared straw, which like a bold temptation called it to a restless motion and activity, but either it was at too big a distance or a gentle breath from heaven diverted the spheare and the ray of the fire to the other side, and so prevented the violence of the burning, till the flame expired in a weak consumption, and dyed turning into smock and the coolnesse of death and the harmlesse of a Cinder: and when a mans desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and passe on in a smooth chanel of opportunity, God often times hinders the lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port, and entering into action, by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a sudden disability, by unreasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very wearinesse of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the desire, bursting it self with its fulnesse into dissolution and a remisse easinesse, by a sentence of scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interventions of the spirit of grace chastising the crime and representing its appendant mischiefs and its *consequent* disorder and irregularity, and after all this, the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose hath rolled it self into so much uneasinesse and uneasie reflections, that the man is grown ashamed and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not lesse then infinite in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbour hood and temptation; for if the *Hyena* and a dog should be thrust into the same

SERMON
XXVI.

same Kennel, one of them would soon finde a grave, and it may be both of them their death; so infallible is the ruine of most men, if they be shewed a temptation: Nitre and resin, Naphtha and Bitumen, sulphur and pitch are their constitution, and the fire passes upon them infinitely, and there is none to secure them. But God by removing our sins far from us, *as far as the East is from the West*, not onely putting away the guilt, but setting the occasion far from us, extremely far; so far that sometimes we *cannot sin*, and many times, *not easily*, hath magnified his mercy, by giving us safety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses, if I should consider concerning the variety of Gods grace, his preventing and accompanying, his inviting and corroborating grace; his assisting us to will, his enabling us to do, his sending Angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company, to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make it by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with virtue, because they have mingled that virtue with a just and a fair interest, to some men by making religion that thing they live upon, to others, the means of their reputation, and the securities of their honour, and thousands of wayes more, which every prudent man that watches the wayes of God cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of mercy, for he that is to passe through an infinite must not dwell upon every little line of life.

ro. The next order of mercies is such, which is of so pure, and unmingled constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and disposition of the receivers, and afterwards when it hath, it relates onely to such conditions, which it self creates and produces in the suscipient, I mean the mercies of the *divine predestination*. For was it not an infinite mercy that God should predestinate all mankind to salvation by Jesus Christ, even when he had no other reason to move him to do it but because man was miserable and needed his pity? But I shall instance onely in the intermediall part of this mysterious mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of Christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish Priest? What distinguished me from another, that my Father was severe in his discipline, and carefull to *bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and I was not exposed to the carelesse of an irreligious guardian, and taught to steal, and lie, and to make sport with my infant vices, and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying Chrysome, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience? What had you done of good, or towards it, that you were not condemned to the stupid ignorance which

A which makes the souls of most men to be little higher than beasts, and who understand nothing of religion and noble principles, of parables and wise sayings of old men. And not onely in our cradles, but in our schools, and our colledges, in our friendships, and in our marriages, in our enmities, and in all our conversation, in our virtues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferiour, there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differencies. Or it may be my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he kill'd a man, but God did not suffer me to do so: He fell down and died with a little disorder,

B I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins: He did amisse once and was surprized in that disadvantage: I sin daily and am still invited to repentance: he would fain have lived and amended; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the Angel of his wrath to execute his anger upon a sinfull people we are encompassed with funerals, and yet the Angel hath not smitten us: what or who makes the difference? We shall then see, when in the separations of eternity, *we sitting in glory*, shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roasting in the seats of the reprobate; we shall then perceive that it is even that mercy which hath no cause but it self, no measure of its emanation but our misery, no natural limit but eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an essential and an unalterable goodnesse, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change, but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance, but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

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11. Lastly, All the mercies of God are concentred in that which is all the felicity of man: and God is so great a lover of souls; that he provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations, and weak dissensions. The particulars I shall remark are these. 1. Gods mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies of men, so that in the convention and assemblies of hereticks (the word is usually understood for erring and mistaken people) although their doctrines are such, that if men should live according to their proper and naturall consequences, they would live impiously, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but truth, while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, that in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory. He that believes contrition alone with confession to a Priest, is enough to exiate ten thousand sins, is furnished with an excuse, easie enough to quit himself from the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap wayes of buying off his penances for a little money, even for the greatest

SERMON
XXVI.

sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act, for which he
 must repent; since repentance is a duty so *soon*, so *certainly*, and
 so *easily* performed: But these are notorious doctrines of the Ro-
 man Church, and yet God so loves the souls of his creatures, that
 many men who trust to these doctrines in their discourses, dare not
 rely upon them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did
 not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly, as if they
 did not believe so foolishly. He that tells, that antecedently God
 hath to all humane choice decreed man to heaven or to hell, takes
 away from man all care of the way, because they believe that he
 that infallibly decreed that end, hath unalterably appointed the
 means, and some men that talk thus wildly live soberly, and are
 over-wrought in their understanding by some secret art of God,
 that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be assisted in his
 choice, and saved by the Divine mercies. And there is no sect of
 men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses to cure the
 venom of their doctrine; and therefore although the adherent and
 constituent poison is notorious and therefore to be declined, yet be-
 cause it is collaterally cured and over-poured by the torrent and
 wisdom of Gods mercies, the men are to be taken into the Quire,
 that we may all joyn in giving God praise for the operation of
 his hands. 2. I said formerly that there are many secret and un-
 discerned mercies by which men live, and of which men can give
 no account till they come to give God thanks at their publication;
 and of this sort, is that mercy which God reserves for the souls of
 many millions of men and women concerning whom we have no
 hopes, if we account concerning them by the usuall proportions
 of revelation and Christian commandements, and yet we are taught
 to hope some strange good things concerning them by the analo-
 gy and generall rules of the Divine mercy. For what shall be-
 come of ignorant Christians, people that live in wildernesses and
 places more desert then a primitive hermitage, people that are
 baptized, and taught to go to Church, it may be once a yeer, peo-
 ple that can get no more knowledge, they know not where to have
 it, nor how to desire it; and yet that an eternity of pains shall be
 consequent to such an ignorance is unlike the mercy of God,
 and yet that they should be in any disposition towards an eternity
 of intellectuall joyes is no where set down in the leaves of reve-
 lation; and when the Jews grew rebellious, or a silly woman of
 the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and sinned, and punished
 with death, we usuallly talk as if that death passed on to a worse;
 but yet we may arrest our thoughts upon the Divine mercies, and
 consider that it is reasonable to expect from the Divine goodnesse,
 that no greater forfeiture be taken upon a law, then was expres-
 sed in its sanction and publication. He that makes a law and bindes
 it with the penalty of stripes, we say he intends not to afflict the dis-
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A obedient with scorpions and axes; and it had been hugely necessary that God had scar'd the Jews from their sins by threatning the pains of hell to them that disobeyed, if he intended to inflict it; for although many men would have ventured the future, since they are not affrighted with the present and visible evil, yet some persons would have had more Philosophical and spiritual apprehensions then others, and have been infallibly cured in all their temptations with the fear of an eternal pain; and however, whether they had or no, yet since it cannot be understood how it consists with the Divine justice to exact a pain bigger then he threatned, greater then he gave warning of; so we are sure it is a great way off from Gods mercy to do so. He that usually imposes lesse, and is loth to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an eternal punishment, when the most that he threatned and gave notice of was but a temporall. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this, that we may publikly worship this mercy of GOD which is kept in secret, and that we be not too forward in sentencing all Heathens, and prevaricating Jews to the eternall pains of hell, but hope that they have a portion in the secrets of the Divine mercy, where also unlesse many of us have some little portions deposited, our condition will bee very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accursed a thing it is to perish in the eternall flames of hell, and therefore he is not easie to inflict it: and if the joyes of heaven be too great to be expected upon too easie termes, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to passe lightly upon persons who cannot help themselves, and who if they were helped with clearer revelations would have avoided it: But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the Divine Oeconomy, being sure whether it be so or no, it is most just, even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the Divine mercy made publike in unexpected instances at the great day of manifestation: And indeed our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely and carelessly, without prayers, without Sacraments, without consideration, without counsell, and without comfort; and to dresse the souls of our dear people to so sad a parting, is an employment, wee therefore omit, not always because wee are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allay the affections of the world, with those melancholy circumstances; but if God did not in his mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for them, and take care of his redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a sad eternity, and without remedy weep together and groan for ever. But God hath provided better things for them, that they without us, that is, without our assistances, shall bee made perfect.



Sermon XXVII.

The Miracles of the Divine Mercy.

Part III.

THere are *very many more* orders and conjugations of mercies, but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatnesse, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a *few more*, and them also without order; for that they do descend upon us, we see and feel, but by what order of things, or causes, is as undiscerned as the head of *Nilus*, or a sudden remembrance of a long neglected and forgotten Proposition: 1. But upon this account it is, that good men have observed, that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living, and does so certainly minister to religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world, and the influences of heaven are taught to serve the ends of *the spirit of God*, and *the spirit of a man*. I do not speak of the miracles that God hath in the severall periods of the world wrought for the establishing his laws, and confirming his promises, and securing our obedience; though that was all the way the over-flowings and miracles of *mercy* as well as *power*: but that which I consider is, that besides the extraordinary emanations of the Divine power upon the first and most solemn occasions of an institution and the first beginnings of a religion, such as were, the wonders God did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, preparatory to the sanction of that law, and *the first covenant*; and the miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles, for the founding and the building up the religion of the Gospel, and *the new covenant*: God does also do things wonderfull and miraculous, for the promoting the ordinary and lesse solemn actions of our piety, and to assist and accompany them in a constant and regular succession. It was a strange variety

A variety of naturall efficacies, that Manna should stink in 24. hours if gathered upon Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till 48. hours if gathered upon the Even of the Sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of yeers when placed in the Sanctuary by the ministry of the high Priest; but so it was in the Jews religion; and Manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure was a different proportion; it was much and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is every where and no where, filling all things, and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one Omer, and doing the work of two; like the crowns of Kings, fitting the browes of Nimrod and the most mighty Warriour, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant Prince. And not onely is it thus in nature, but in contingencies and acts depending upon the choice of men; for God having commanded the sons of Israel to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice every year, and to leave their borders to be guarded by women, and children, and sick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spitefull enemies, yet God so disposed of their hearts and opportunities, that they never entred the land when the people were at their solemnity; untill they defecrated their rites, by doing at their Pascheover the greatest sin and treason in the world; till at Easter they crucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders; but when they had destroyed religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the City at the feast of Easter, that the more might perish in the deluge of the Divine indignation.

To this observation the Jews adde, that in Jerusalem no man ever had a fall that came thither to worship; that at their solemn festivals there was reception in the Town for all the inhabitants of the land; concerning which although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person among all the tribes of Israel was ever a *begger*, but all the variety of humane chances, were over-ruled to the purposes of providence, and providence was measured by the ends of the religion, and the religion which promised them plenty, performed the promise till the Nation and the religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better ministry, and a more excellent dispensation of the things of the world.

But when Christian religion was planted and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the Head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now *angels are ministering spirits*, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord, and all the violence of men, and things of nature,

SERMON
XXVII.

and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministeries, and to cooperate as with an united designe to verifie all the promises of the Gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom; and how he that is made poor by chance, or persecution, is made rich by religion, and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things, and sorrow it self is the greatest comfort, not onely because it ministers to vertue, but because *it self is one*, as in the case of repentance; and *death ministers to life*, and *bondage is freedom*, and *losse is gain*, and *our enemies are our friends*, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity, and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation: certain it is that Angels of light and darknesse, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars, and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the Sea, and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficient, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen, and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance, and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire, and great interest, is by all means to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to religion, to the good of the Catholike Church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooseth.

2. But that which is next to this, and not much unlike the designe of this wonderfull mercy, is, that all the actions of religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing and sometimes of contradictory relations are so concentrated in God their proper centre, and conducted in such certain and pure channels of *reason* and *rule*, that no one duty does contradict another; and it can never be necessary for any man in any case to sin. They that bound themselves by an oath to kill Paul were not environed with the sad necessities of murder on one side, and vow-breach on the other, so that if they did murder him they were man-slayers, if they did not they were perjured; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawfull oath should passe an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawfull confederation against his Prince, is not girded with a fatall necessity of breach of trust on one side, or breach of allegiance on the other; for in this also God hath secured the case of conscience, by forbidding any man to make an unlawfull promise, and upon a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it in case he hath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawfull to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*; But yet Gods mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandement, nor against

A against his conscience; for he is bound to lay aside his error and be better instructed; till when, the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact; *No man can serve two Masters*, but therefore *he must hate the one and cleave to the other*. But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in sin, and that the great long suffering of God is expressed in this, that God *suffered the contradiction of sinners*, we shall feel the mercy of God in the peace of our consciences and the unity of religion, so long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a covetous man that he is the further off from fulness by having great heaps and vast revenues; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it; and that the more he shall need to be satisfied, the lesse he shall dare to do it; and that he shall refuse to drink because he is dry; that he dyes if he tastes, and languishes if he does not; and at the same time he is full and empty, bursting with a plethory, and consumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oyle and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian sands; but then the contradiction is multiplied and the labyrinths more amazed, when prodigality waits upon another curse, and covetousnesse heaps up, that prodigality may scatter abroad: then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two Devils to serve of contradictory designes, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably then the Egyptian task-masters; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things, but they begin where they should end, and begin again, and never passe forth to content or reason, or quietnesse, or possession. But the duty of a Christian is easie in a persecution, it is clear under a Tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresie, it is one in the midst of schisme, it is determined amongst infinite disputes, being like a rock in the sea which is beaten with the tide and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it alwayes dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more: so is our duty, uniform, and constant, open and notorious, variously represented, but in the same manner exacted: and in the interest of our souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty or the variety of any thing that can change, and it is by the grace and mercy of God put into the power of every Christian to do that which God through Jesus Christ will accept to salvation: and neither men nor Devils shall hinder it unless we lift our selves.

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3. After all this we may sit down and reckon by great sums and conjugations of his gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the Divine mercies: God hath given his laws to rule us, his word to instruct us, his spirit to guide us, his Angels

SERMON
XXVII.

Angels to protect us, *by* ministers to exhort us; he revealed all our duty and he hath *concealed* whatsoever can hinder us, he hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming; he hath exercised our faith by keeping private the state of souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our faith by a promise of a resurrection and entertained our hope by some general significations of the state of interval: His mercies make contemptible means instrumentall to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases; he impedes the Devils rage and infatuates his counsels, he diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes, he binds him in the chain of darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; he suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a childe; he hath given him mighty power, & yet a young maiden that resists him shall make him flee away; he hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve articles of his creed, he gave him power over the winds, and made him Prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea; and he hath so restrained him, that (except it be by faith) we know not whether there be any Devils, yea, or no: for we never heard his noises, nor have seen his affrighting shapes.] This is that great Principle of all the felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means he hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary, and all mutual helpers, and by some instruments and in some respects they are all equall in order to felicity, to content and final and intermedial satisfactions: He gave us part of our reward in hand, that he might inable us to work for more; he taught the world arts for use, arts for entertainment of all our faculties, and all our dispositions: he gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want, *for asking*, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refusing to be happy. This is that glorious attribute that hath made *order*, and *health*, and *harmony* and *hope*, *resolutions* and *variety*, the joyes of direct possession, and the joyes, the artificial joyes of contrariety and comparison; he comforts the poor, and he brings down the rich, that they may be safe in their humility and sorrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and unimpaired prosperity; he gives necessities to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so, that every nation may traffick in charity, and contribute for pleasures; He was the *Lord of hosts*, and he is still what he was, but he loves to be called *the God of peace*, because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of heaven; his mercy is the life of the creation, and it fills all the earth, and his mercy is a sea too; and it fills all the abysses of the deep: it hath given us promises

A promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our fears, and in all the evils that we suffer; his mercies are more then wee can tell, and they are more then we can feel; for all the world in the abyſſe of the Divine Mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the Sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly, and unperceived; and yet the weight is vast, and the summe of them is unmeasurable, and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers; and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity, but we must *admire*, and *love*, and *worship*, and *magnifie* this mercy for ever and ever; that wee may dwell in what wee feel, and be comprehended by that which is equall to God, and the parent of all felicity.

B And yet this is but the one half. The mercies of *giving* I have now told of, but those of *forgiving* are greater, though not more. [*He is ready to forgive*] and upon this stock thrives the interest of our great hope, the hopes of a blessed immortality; for if the mercies of giving have not made our expectations big enough to entertain the confidences of heaven: yet when we think of the graciousnesse and readinesse of *forgiving*, wee may with more readinesse hope to escape hell, and then wee cannot but bee blessed by an eternall consequence: we have but small opinion of the Divine mercy, if we dare not beleve concerning it, that it is *desirous*, and *able*, and *watchfull*, and *passionate* to keep us, or rescue us respectively from such a condemnation *the pain* of which is insupportable, and *the duration* is eternall, and *the extension* is misery upon all our faculties, and the intension is great beyond patience or naturall or supernaturall abilities, and *the state* is a state of darknesse, and despair, of confusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit, and gnashing of teeth, misery universall, perfect and irremediable. From this it is which Gods mercies would so fain preserve us: This is a state that God provides for his enemies, not for them that love him, that entreat our to obey, though they do it but in weaknesse, that weep truly for their sinnes, though but with a shower no bigger then the drops of pity, that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter then a poor mans candle, though their strengths are no greater then a contrite reed, or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth then the smoke of kindling flax; if our *faith* bee pure, and *our love* unsainted, if the degrees of it bee great, God will accept it into glory: if it bee little, hee will accept it into grace, and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of Gods readinesse to forgive: he will upon any termes, that are not unreasonable, and that do not suppose a remanent affection to sin, keep us from the intolerable pains of hell. And indeed if we consider the constitution

SERMON
XXVII.

constitution of the conditions which God requires, wee shall soon perceive God intends heaven to us as a meer gift, and that the duties on our part are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections, and our love, that the Devil might not seize upon that portion which to eternal ages shall be the instrument of our happiness. For in all the parts of our duty, it may be there is but one instance in which wee are to do violence to our naturall and first desires. For those men have very ill natures, to whom vertue is so contrary that they are inclined naturallly to *lust*, to *drunkenness* and *anger*, and *pride* and *covetousness*, and *unthankfulness* and *disobedience*: Most men that are tempted with lust, could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels, as of temperance, and justice, or religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of lust, and persons that are greedy of money, are not fond of amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the wine, and one vice destroys another, and when one vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment and dereliction of the man, unlesse where vices have cognation, and seem but like severall degrees of one another; and it is evil custome and superinduced habits that make artificiall appetites in most men to most sinnes; But many times their naturall temper vexes them into uneasy dispositions and aptnesses onely to some one unhandsome sort of action; that one thing therefore is it in which God demands of thee *mortification* and *self-deniall*.

Certain it is; There are very many men in the world that would faine commute their severity in all other instances for a licence in their one appetite; they would not refuse long prayers after a drunken meeting, or *great alms* together with one *great lust*; but then consider how easie it is for them to go to heaven; God demands of them for his sake and their own, to crucifie but one natural lust or one evil habit (for all the rest they are easie enough to do themselves) and God will give them heaven, where the joy is more then one, and I said it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any lesse evil to which the temptation is trifling should interpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy: and our little and inferiour appetites that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences, then by direct violence, must not dwell with him who hath crossed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance; since therefore this is the state of most men, and God in effect demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that will give them all good things, it gives demonstration of his huge easinesse to redeem us from that intolerable evil that is equally consequent to the indulging to one or to twenty sinfull habits.

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A 2. Gods readinesse to pardon appears in this, that he pardons before we ask, for he that bids us ask for pardon hath in designe and purpose done the thing already: for what is wanting on his part *in whose onely power* it is to give pardon, and *in whose desire* it is that we should be pardoned, and *who commands* us to lay hold upon the offer, he hath done all that belongs to God; that is, all that concerns the pardon: there it lies ready, it is recorded in the book of life, it wants nothing, but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consigne and passe the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair or sin.

B 3. Nay God is so ready in his mercy, that he did pardon us even before he redeemed us: for what is the secret of the mysterie, that the eternal Son of God should take upon him our nature, and die our death, and suffer for our sins and do our work, and enable us to do our own? he that did this is God: he who *thought it no robbery to be equall with God*: he came to satisfie himself, to pay to himself the price for his own creature: and when he did this for us that he might pardon us, was he at that instant angry with us? was this an effect of his anger or of his love, that God sent his Son to work our pardon and salvation? Indeed we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life: but he was reconciled to us so far, as that he then did the greatest thing in the world for us: for nothing could be greater then that *God, the Son of God*, should die for us: here was reconciliation before pardon: and God that came to die for us did love us first before he came: this was hasty love. But it went further yet.

C 4. God pardoned us before we sinned; and when he fore saw our sin, even mine and yours, he sent his son to die for us; our pardon was wrought and effected by Christs death above 1600. yeeres agoe; and for the sins of to morrow, and the infirmities of the next day Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead, and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not onely a favour to us who were born in the due time of the Gospel, but to all mankinde since Adam; For God, who is infinitely patient in his justice, was not at all patient in his mercy; he forbears to strike and punish us, but he would not forbear to provide cure for us, and remedy; for as if God could not stay from redeeming us, he promised the Redeemer to Adam, in the beginning of the worlds sin; and Christ was the lamb slain from the beginning of the world; and the covenant of the Gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to his part, as to the ministration of pardon; The seed of the woman was set up against the dragon as soon as ever the Tempter had won his first battle; and though God laid his hand, and drew a vail of types and secrefye before the manifestation of his mercies, yet he did the work of redemption

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E

SERMON
XXVII.

demption. and saved us by the covenant of faith, and the righteousness of believing, and the mercies of repentance, the graces of pardon, and the blood of the slain lamb, even from the fall of Adam to this very day, and will do, till Christs second coming.

Adam fell by his folly and did not perform the covenant of one little work, a work of a single abstinence; but he was restored by faith in the seed of the woman; and of this righteousness Noah was a preacher; and by faith Enoch was translated, and by faith a remnant was saved at the flood: and to Abraham *this was imparted for righteousness* and to all the Patriarchs, and to all the righteous judges, and holy Prophets, and Saints of the Old Testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their covenant were expressed) to the law of works, their pardon was sealed and kept within the vail, within the curtains of the sanctuary, and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since, and this was a great excellency of the Divine mercy unto them: God had mercy on all mankind before Christs manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their covenant: and they were saved as we are, by the seed of the woman, by God incarnate by the lamb slain from the beginning of the world; not by works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact obedience, but by faith working by love, by sincere, hearty endeavours and believing God and relying upon his infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy Jesus Christ. So that here is pardon before we asked it; pardon before Christs coming, pardon before redemption, and pardon before we sinned: what greater readinesse to forgive us can be imagined? yes: there is one degree more yet; and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5 For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more pardon; he pardons us by turning every one of us away from our iniquities; that is the purpose of Christ, that he might safely pardon us before we sinned; and we might not sin upon the confidence of pardon, he pardoned us not onely upon condition we would sin no more, but he took away our sin, cured our cursed inclinations, instructed our understanding, rectified our will, fortified us against temptations, and now every man whom he pardons he also sanctifies, and he is born of God, and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains within him, so long as his pardon continues. This is the consummation of pardon. For if God had so pardoned us, as onely to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a redeemer for every moneth, and new pardons perpetually. But our blessed Redeemer hath taken away our sin, not onely the gift of our old, but our inclinations to new sins: he makes us like himself, and commands us to live so, that we shall not need a second pardon, that is, a second

A a second state of pardon: for we are but once baptized into Christs death, and that death was one, and our redemption but one, and our covenant the same, and as long as we continue within the covenant, we are still within the power and comprehensions of the first pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the spirit, yet we resist him, and we grieve him: and we go off from the holiness of the covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed: and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the Holy Jesus, *the Author and finisher of our faith* and pardon, sits in heaven in a perpetuall advocacy for us, that this pardon once wrought may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumor of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and upon every true and sincere return of a hearty repentance: And now upon *this title*, no more degrees can be added: it is already greater, and was before all our needs, and was greater then the old covenant, and beyond the revelations, and did in Adams youth antedate the Gospel, turning the *publike miseries* by *secret grace*, into *eternall glories*. But now upon other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and swells like an hydropick cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosome of heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showers, to water and refresh the earth.

7. God is so ready to forgive that himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must in some degree pardon us before we are capable of pardon, by his grace making way for his mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unlesse GOD by his preventing grace should first work the first part of our pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, wee could not desire a pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it: This giving of *preventing grace*, is a mercy of forgiveness contrary to that severity by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sense; that is, a leaving of men to themselves, so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so plenteously, and the Son of God purchased so dearly for us. When GOD sends a plague of warre upon a land, in all the accounts of religion, and expectations of reason, the way to obtain our peace is to leave our sinnes, for which the war was sent upon us, as the messenger of wrath: and without this, wee are like to perish in the judgement. But then consider what a sad condition wee are in, warre mends but few, but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine, and authorizes murder,

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and

SERMON
XXVII.

and these crimes must be ministred to by their lesser relatives, by covetousnesse, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder liberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, such cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the sin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed? How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sicknesse, and our Antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of Gods preventing grace; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to ascertain us we shall have it: But unlesse God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, wee see there is no help in us, nor for us. If we be not smitten we are undone, if wee are smitten we perish: and as young Damarchus said of his Love, when he was made master of his wifh; *Salvus sum quia pereo, si non peream, plane inteream*, wee may say of some of Gods judgements: We perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten, and if they be, then we are worse undone; because we grow worse for being miserable; but we can be relieved onely by a free mercy; for *pardon is the way to pardon*: and when God gives us our penny, then we can work for another, and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that wee can do towards it, is but to take it in Gods method; and this must needs be a great forwardnesse of forgiveness, when Gods mercy gives *the pardon*, and *the way* to finde it, and *the hand* to receive it, and *the eye* to search it, and *the heart* to desire it; being busie and effective as Elijah's fire, which intending to convert the sacrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances; stood in the neighbourhood of the fuell, and called forth all its enemies, and licked up the hindering moisture, and the water of the trenches, and made the Altar send forth a phantastick smoke before the sacrifice was enkindled: So is the preventing grace of God, it does all the work of our souls, and makes its own way, and invites it self, and prepare its own lodging, and makes its own entertainment, it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our desires, it provokes us to pray, and sanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the desire valid, and the desire does make the act certain, and persevering; and both of them are the works of God: for more is received into the soul from without the soul, then do s proceed from within the soul: It is more for the soul to bee moved and disposed, then to work when that is done: as the passage from death to life is greater then from life to action, especially since the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of Gods forwardnesse and readinesse to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient

A ficient, but Gods own words describing mercy in all those dimensions which can signifie to us its greatnesse and infinity. His mercy is great, his mercies are many, his mercy reacheth unto the heavens, it fills heaven and earth, it is above all his works, it endureth for ever, God setteth as a Father doth his children; nay he is our Father, and the same also is the Father of mercy, and the God of all comfort: So that mercy and we have the same relation; and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man onely, God shews the mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away his mercy, man shall be no more, no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition, or his person. But as God preserves man by his mercy, so his mercy hath all its operations upon man, and returns to its own centre and incircumscription, and infinity, unlesse it issues forth upon us. And therefore besides the former great lines of the mercy of forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce and tell its links, is to open a cabinet of Jewels, where every stone is as bright as a star, and every star is great as the Sun, and shines for ever, unlesse we shut our eyes, or draw the vail of obstinate and finall sins.

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before he be angry, and yet God is provoked every day, by the obstinacy of the Jews, and the folly of the Heathens, and the rudenesse and infidelity of the Mahometans, and the negligence and vices of Christians; and he that can behold no impurity is received in all places with perfumes of musk-romes, and garments spotted with the flesh, and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil conscience, and with accursed sins that he hates, upon pretence of religion which he loves; and he is made a party against himself by our voluntary mistakes, and men continue ten years, and 20. and 30. and 50. in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God forbears to kill them, and to consigne them over to an eternity of horrid pains, still expecting that they should repent and be saved.

2. Besides this long-sufferance and for-bearing with an unwearied patience, God also excuses a sinner oftentimes and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move him to intermediall favours first; and from thence to a finall pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with an huge easinesse to pardon, if he be intreated and reconciled by the effective repentance of a vigorous manhood; he takes ignorance for an excuse, and in every degree of its being inevitable, or innocent in its proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. But I found mercy of the Lord because I did it in ignorance, saith S. Paul; he pities our infirmities and strikes off much of the account upon that stock; the violence of a temptation and restlessness of its motion, the perpetuity of its solicitation, the weariness

SERMON
XXVII.

rineſſe of a mans ſpirit, the ſtate of ſickneſſe, the neceſſity of ſecular affairs, the publike cuſtoms of a people have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards ſome degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives himſelf forced to ſtrike, yet then he takes off his hand and repents him of the evil: It is as if it were againſt him, that any of his creatures ſhould fall under the ſtrokes of an exterminating fury.

4. When he is forced to proceed, he yet makes an end before he hath half done: and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to ſtrike leſſe, as if he himſelf had the deliverance and not we: When Ahab had but humbled himſelf at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the meſſage to the prophet *himſelf*, ſaying, *Seeſt thou not how Ahab humbles himſelf?* What was the event of it? *I will not bring the evil in his dayes*, but in his ſons dayes the evil ſhall come upon his houſe.

5. God forgets our ſin and puts it out of his remembrance, that is, he makes it as though it had never been: he makes penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory: the memory of the ſins ſhall not be upon record, to be uſed to any after act of diſadvantage, and never ſhall return unleſſe we force them out of their ſecret places by ingratitude and a new ſtate of ſinning.

6. God ſometimes gives pardon beyond all his revelations and declared will, and provides ſuppletories of repentance, even then when he cuts a man off from the time of repentance, accepting a temporal death inſtead of an eternal: that although the Divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in ſome caſes, & to ſome perſons, the death and the very cutting off ſhall go no further, but be inſtead of explicate and long repentances. Thus it happened to *Uzzab*, who was ſmitten for his zeal, and died in ſeverity for prevaricating the letter, by earneſtneſſe of ſpirit to ſerve the whole religion. Thus it was alſo in the caſe of the Corinthians that died a temporal death for their undecent circumſtances in receiving the holy Sacrament. Saint Paul, who uſed it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no further, nor preſſed the argument to a ſadder iſſue then to die temporally.

But theſe ſuppletories are but ſeldom, and they are alſo great troubles, and ever without comfort, and diſpenſed irregularly, and that not in the caſe of habituall ſins that we know of, or very great ſins, but in ſingle actions, or inſtances of a leſſe malignity; and they are not to be relied upon, becauſe there is no rule concerning them; but when they do happen, they magnifie the infiniteneſſe of Gods mercy, which is commensurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of his own revelations.

7. God pardons the greateſt ſinners, and hath left them upon record:

A Hebrd: and there is no instance in the scripture of the divine forgiveness, but in such instances, the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak aloud the glories of Gods mercies, and gentleness, and readinesse to forgive: Such were S. Paul a persecutor, and S. Peter that forswore his Master; Mary Magdalene, with seven Devils, the thief upon the crosse, Manasses an Idolater, David a murderer and adulterer, the Corinthian for incest, the children of Israel for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and infidelity, and rebellion, and schisme, and a golden calf, and open disobedience; and above all, I shall instance in the Pharisees among the Jews, who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, as our Blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, viz. in saying that the Spirit of God by which Christ did work was an evil spirit; and afterward they crucified Christ, so that two of the Persons of the most Holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off; yet 40. years time (after all this) was left for their repentance, and they were called upon by arguments more persuasive and more excellent in that 40. years, then all the Nation had heard from their Prophets, even from Samuel to Zecharias. And Jonas thought he had reason on his side, to refuse to go to threaten Nineveh; he knew Gods tenderness in destroying his creatures, and he should be thought to be but a false Prophet; and so it came to passe according to his belief. *Jonah prayed unto the Lord and said, I pray thee Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country, therefore I fled, for I knew thou wert a gracious God and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil: He told before hand what the event would be; and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Israel, and made it to be his Name, Misericors & misericors Deus. The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull and gracious, &c.*

Jonah. 4. 2.

Exod. 34. 6.

B You see the largeness of this treasure; but we can see no end, for we have not yet looked upon the rare arts of conversion: nor that God leaves the naturall habit of vertues, even after the acceptation is interrupted: nor his working extraregular miracles, besides the sufficiency of Moses and the Prophets, and the New Testament, and thousands more which we cannot consider now.

E But this we can, when God sent an Angel to pour plagues upon the earth, there were in their hands *Phials aurea*, golden Phials: for the death of men is precious and costly, and it is an expence that God delights not in: but they were Phials, that is, such vessels as out of them no great evil could come at once: but it comes out with difficulty, sobbing and troubled as it passes forth: it comes thorow a narrow neck, and the parts of it croud at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each others neighbourhood: and all strive to get out, but few can passe, as if God did nothing but threa-

SERMON
XXVII.

ten, and draw his judgements to the mouth of the *Phil* with a full body, and there made it stop it self. A

The result of this consideration is, that as we fear the Divine judgements, so that we adore and love his goodnesse, and let the golden chains of the Divine mercy tie us to a noble prosecution of our duty and the interests of religion; For he is the worst of men whom Kindenesse cannot soften, nor endearments oblige, whom gratitude cannot tie faster then the bands of life and death: He is an ill natur'd sinner if he will not comply with the sweetneses of heaven, and be civil to his Angel guardian, or observant of his *Patron God*, who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly then a Nurse, more diligently then a Client, who hath greater care of him then his father, and whose bowels yern over him with more compassion then a mother; who is bountifull beyond our needs, and mercifull beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. *Fear* is stronger then *death*, and *Love* is more prevalent then *Fear*, and *kindenesse* is the greatest endearment of *Love*; and yet to an ingenious person *gratitude* is greater then all these, and obliges to a solemn duty when *love* fails, and *fear* is dull and unactive, and *death* it self is despised: but the man who is hardened against kindnesse, and whose duty is not made alive with gratitude, must be used like a slave, and driven like an ox, and inticed with goads and whips: but must never enter into the inheritance of sons: *Let us take heed*: for Mercy is like a rainbowe, which God set in the clouds to remember mankinde; it shines here as long as it is not hindred; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it shines not in the other world: if we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.

Ser.



Sermon. XXVIII.

A FVNERAL SERMON,

Preached at the Obsequies of the Right Honorable
and most vertuous Lady,

The Lady FRANCES Countesse of CARBERY:

Who deceased *October* the 9th. 1650. at her House *Golden-grove*
in *CARMARTHEN-SHIRE*.

To the Right Honorable, and truly Noble,

RICHARD Lord VAUGHAN, Earl of *Carbery*,

Baron of *Emlin* and *Molinger*, Knight of
the Honorable Order of the *Bath*.

My Lord,



Am not ashamed to professe that I pay this part of service
to your Lordship most unwillingly: for it is a sad office
to be the chief Minister in the house of mourning, and
to present an interested person with a branch of Cypress
and a bottle of tears. And indeed, my Lord, it
were more proportionable to your needs to bring some-
thing that might alleviate your sorrow, then to dresse
the hearse of your Dear Lady, and to furnish it with such circumstances,
that it may dwell with you, and lie in your closet, and make your pray-
ers and your retirements more sad and full of weepings. But because
the Divine providence hath taken from you a person so excellent, a
woman fit to converse with Angels, and Apostles, with Saints and Mara-
tyrs,

SERMON
XXVIII.

tyrs. give me leave to present you with her picture; drawn in little and in water-colours; sullied indeed with tears and the abrupt accents of a real and constant sorrow; but drawn with a faithful hand, and taken from the life: and indeed it were too great a loss, to be deprived of her example and of her aid, if the original and the copy too. The age is very evil and has lost her art; but because it is so evil, it hath the more need to have such things preserved in memory to instruct our piety, or to aid our wickedness. For now that God hath cut this tree of Paradise down from its seat of earth, yet so the dead trunk may support a part of the declining Temple, or at least serve to kindle the fire on the altar. My Lord, I pray God this heap of sorrow may swell your piety till it breaks into the greatest joys of God and of Religion: And remember, when you pay a tear upon the grave, or to the memory of your Lady (that dear and most excellent soul) that you pay two more: one of repentance for those things that may have caused this breach; and another of joy for the mercies of God to your Dear departed Saint, that he hath taken her into a place where she can weep no more. My Lord, I think I shall, so long as I live, that is so long as I am

Your Lordships

most humble Servant.

TAYLOR.

A

E

Pietati & Memoria Sacrum.

MOnumentum doloris singularis, paris fati & conditionis posuit *Richardus* Comes *Carberiensis* sibi vivo, & mortem nec exoptanti nec metuenti: Et dilectissimæ suæ Conjugi *Franciscæ* Comitissæ in flore ætatis casibus puerperii raptæ ex amplexibus Sanctissimi amoris. Fuit illa (descendat lachrymula Amice lector) fuit inter castissimas prima, inter Conjuges amantissima, Mater optima: placidi oris, severæ virtutis,

conversationis suavissimæ: vultum hilarem fecit bona conscientia, amabilem, forma plusquam Uxoriam. Claris

orta Natalibus, fortunam non medio-
crem habuit; erat enim cum Unicâ Ger-
manâ Hæres ex asse. Annos XIII, Menses
IV, supra Biduum vixit in Sanctissimo
Matrimonio cum SUI O quem effusissi-
mè dilexit, & sanctè observavit; quem
novit Prudentissimum, sensit Amantif-
simum, virum Optimum vidit & lætata
est. Enixa prolem Numerosam, pul-
chram, ingenuam, formæ & Spei opti-
mæ; quatuor Masculos, *Franciscum* Do-
minum *Vaughan*, *Johannem*, *Althamum*,
quartum immaturum; fœminas sex
Dom: *Franciscam*, *Elizabethas* duas, *Mari-*
am, *Margaretam*, & *Althamiam* [post cujus
partum paucis diebus obdormiit.] To-

tam prolem Masculam (si demas abortivum illum) &
fœminas omnes, præter *Elizabetham* alteram, & *Mariam*,

superstites reliquit. Fietatis adeoq; Spei plena obiit ix. Octobr. M.DC.L.
Lachrymis suorum omnium tota irrigua conditur in hoc cœmeterio, ubi
cùm Deo Opt. Max. visum fuerit, sperat se reponendum Conjux mœstif-
simus: intereà temporis luctui, sed pietati magis vacat, ut in suo tempore
simul lætentur Par tam Pium, tam Nobile, tam Christianum in gremio
Jesu, usque dum Coronæ adornentur accipiendæ in Adventu Domini.

A M E N.

Cum ille vitâ defunctus fuerit, Marmor loquetur, quod adhuc
tacere jubet virtus Modesta: interim vitæ ejus observa, &
leges quod postea hîc inscriptum amabunt & colent Posterî.

Ora & abi.

leges quod postea hic inscriptum amabant & colant Possent.
facere juber virtus Modesta: interum vitam eius observas &
Cum ille vita defunctus fuerit. Marmor loquatur, quod adhuc

A M A N

Admirationem Per tam Rurum, tam Nobile, tam Christianum in gremio
fuit: interea temporis Insula, sed pietati magis vacat, ac in tuo tempore
cum Deo Opte Max. visum fuerit, sperat se respondendum Coniux mox
Lachrymis suorum omnium tota in ruga conditur in hoc coemeterio, ubi
superstites reliquit. Fictitiasque: Speciem obit ix. Octob. M.D.C.L.

locum omnes, praeter Elisabetham alicam & Mariam,
tam prolem Mactulam (si demas abortivum illum) &

partum paucis diebus obdormit.] To-
rat Margaritam, & Elisabetham [post cuius
Dom: Elisabetham, Elisabetham duas Mari-
tatem inveniuntur: feminas sex
minim: Elisabetham, Johannem, Abrahamum,
ma: quatuor Mactulos, Franciscum Do-
ctam, ingenuam, formam & spec opti-
est. Elisabetham, Nunciatam, pul-
limum, virum Optimum vidit & latus
novit Pindarissimum, scilicet Amantem
me dilexit, & itaque observavit: quem
Matrimonio cum: 210. annis effugit.

17. Sept. Biduum vixit in 210. annis
in 17. Sept. ex 17. Annos XII. Mactos
etiam habuit, erat enim cum Ulrici Ger-
oata Natalis, totam non medio-

concordia, amicum, formam, ingenuam, latus, Clavis
concordia, amicum, formam, ingenuam, latus, bona

inter conjugum amantissimum Mactos optima: placidi optima: vixit
illi & exoritur lachrymosa Amica, tota inter castissimos pueros
exte castissimus, inter optima: amplexibus, illi amoris. Fuit
nocturnum: Et dilectissimum, latus Coniux, Formam, Comitibus in flore
Richardus Comes Castellanus libi vivo, & mortem nec exoptant
Mactos, latus dolores, latus, latus, & concordia, bona

B For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.

C

Gods displeasure should produce a storm, which was the daughter of the biggest anger, and the mother of the greatest calamity which ever crushed any of the sons of Adam *[the time shall come, that there shall not be left one stone upon another.]* The whole Temple and the Religion, the Ceremonies ordained by God, and the Nation beloved by God, and the Fabrick erected for the service of God, shall run to their own period, and lie down in their severall graves. What-

E

look

SERMON
XXVIII.

look like health and beauty, and in the evening they are sick, and at night are dead, and the oven is their grave. And as before, even from our first spring from the dust of the earth, *we might have died* if we had not been preserved by the continuall flux of a rare providence: so now that we are reduced to the laws of our own nature, *we must needs die*. It is naturall, and therefore necessary; It is become a punishment to us, and therefore it is unavoidable, and God hath bound the evil upon us by bands of naturall and inseparable propriety, and by a supervening unalterable decree of Heaven: and we are fallen from our privilege, and are returned to the condition, of beast, and buildings, and common things: And we see Temples defiled unto the ground, and they die by Sacrilege: and great Empires die by their own plenty and ease, full humors and factious Subjects: and huge buildings fall by their own weight, and the violence of many winters eating and consuming the cement, which is the marrow of their bones: and Princes die like the meanest of their servants: and every thing findes a grave and a tomb; and the very tomb it self dies by the bignesse of its pompousnesse and luxury.

*Phario nutantia pondera saxo
Que cineri vanus dat ruitura labor,*

and becomes as friable and uncombined dust as the ashes of the Sinner or the Saint that lay under it, and is now forgotten in his bed of darknesse: And to this Catalogue of mortality Man is intolled with a *[Statutum est]* It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death comes judgement; and if a man can be stronger then nature, or can wrestle with a degree of Heaven, or can escape from a Divine punishment by his own arts, so that neither the power nor the providence of God, nor the laws of nature, nor the bands of eternall predestination can hold him, then he may live beyond the fate and period of flesh, and last longer then a flower; But if all these can hold us and tie us to conditions, then we must lay our heads down upon a turfe, and entertain creeping things in the cels and little chambers of our eyes, and dwell with worms till time and death shall be no more. *We must needs die* That's our sentence. But that's not all

Wee are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again Stay. 1. We are as water, weak and of no consistence, alwayes descending, abiding in no certain place, unlesse where wee are detained with violence: and every little breath of winde makes us rough and tempestuous, and troubles our faces: every trifling accident discomposes us; and as the face of the waters waisting in a storm, so wrinkles it self, that it makes upon its fore head furrows deep and hollow like a grave: so do our great and little cares and trifles, first make the wrinkles of old age, and then they dig a grave for us: And there is in nature nothing so contemptible, but

A but it may meet with us in such circumstances, that it may be too hard for us in our weaknesse: and the sting of a Bee is a weapon sharp enough to pierce the finger of a childe, or the lip of a man: and those creatures which nature hath left without weapons, yet they are armed sufficiently to vex those parts of men which are left defenselesse and obnoxious to a Sun-beam, to the roughnesse of a sower grape, to the unevennesse of a gravel-stone, to the dust of a wheel, or the unwholesome breath of a star looking awry upon a sinner.

2. But besides the weaknesse and naturall decayings of our bodies, if chances and contingencies be innumerable, then no man can reckon our dangers, and the præternatural causes of our deaths. So that he is a vain person whose hopes of life are too confidently increased by reason of his health: and he is too unreasonably timorous, who thinks his hopes at an end when he dwels in sicknesse. For men die without rule; and with, and without occasions; and no man suspecting or foreseeing any of deaths addresses, and no man in his whole condition is weaker then another. A man in a long Consumption is fallen under one of the solemnities and preparations to death: but at the same instant the most healthfull person is as neer death, upon a more fatall, and a more sudden, but a lesse discerned cause. There are but few persons upon whose foreheads every man can read the sentence of death written in the lines of a lingring sicknesse, but they (sometimes) hear the passing-bell ring for stronger men, even long before their own knell calls at the house of their mother to open her womb and make a bed for them. No man is surer of to morrow then the weakest of his brethren: and when *Lepidus* and *Anfidius* stumbled at the threshold of the Senate and fell down and died, the blow came from heaven in a cloud, but it struck more suddenly then upon the poor slave that made sport upon the Theatre with a præmeditated and foredescribed death: *Quod quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis cautum est in horis.* There are sicknesses that walk in darknesse, and there are exterminating Angels that fly wrapt up in the curtains of immateriality and an uncommunicating nature; whom we cannot see, but we feel their force and sink under their sword; and from heaven the vail descends that wraps our heads in the fatal sentence. There is no age of man but it hath proper to it self some posterns and out-lets for death, besides those infinite and open ports out of which myriads of men and women every day passe into the dark and the land of forgetfulnesse. *Infancie* hath life but in *effigie*, or like a spark dwelling in a pile of wood: the candle is so newly lighted, that every little shaking of the taper, and every ruder breath of air, puts it out, and it dies. *Childhood* is so tender, and yet so unwary; so soft to all the impressions of chance, and yet so forward to run into them, that God knew there could be no security

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without

SERMON
XXVIII.

without the care and vigilance of an Angel keeper: and the eyes of Parents, and the arms of Nurses, the provisions of art, and all the effects of Humane love and Providence are not sufficient to keep one childe from horrid mischiefs, from strange and early calamities and deaths, unlesse a messenger be sent from heaven to stand sentinell, and watch the very playings and the sleepings, the eatings and the drinkings of the children; and it is a long time before nature makes them capable of help: for there are many deaths, and very many diseases to which poor babes are exposed; but they have but very few capacities of physick; to shew, that infancy is as liable to death as old age, and equally exposed to danger, and equally uncapable of a remedy: with this onely difference, that old age hath diseases incurable by nature, and the diseases of child-hood are incurable by art; and both the states are the next heirs of death.

3.

3. But all the middle way *the case is altered*. Nature is strong, and art is apt to give ease and remedy: But still, there is no security; and there, the case is not altered. 1 For there are so many diseases in men that are not understood. 2 So many new ones every year. 3 The old ones are so changed in circumstance, and intermingled with so many collateral complications. 4 The Symptoms are oftentimes so alike. 5 Sometimes so hidden and fallacious. 6 Sometimes none at all (as in the most sudden and the most dangerous imposthumations.) 7 And then the diseases in the inward parts of the body, are oftentimes such, to which no application can be made. 8 They are so far off, that the effects of all medicines can no otherwise come to them, then the effect and juices of all meats, that is, not till after two or three alterations, and decoctions, which change the very species of the medicament. 9 And after all this, very many principles in the art of Physick, are so uncertain, that after they have been believed seven or eight ages, and that upon them much of the practise hath been established; they come to be considered by a witty man, and others established in their stead; by which men must practise, and by which three or four generations of men more (as happens) must live or die. 10 And all this while the men are sick, and they take things that certainly make them sicker for the present, and very uncertainly restore health for the future: that it may appear of what a large extent is humane calamity; when Gods providence hath not onely made it weak and miserable, upon the certain stock of a various nature, and upon the accidents of an infinite contingency; but even from the remedies which are appointed, our dangers and our troubles are certainly increased: so that wee may well be likened to water; our nature is no stronger, our aboad no more certain; If the sluices be opened, it falls away and runneth apace; if its current be stopped, it swells and grows troublesome, and spils over with

with a greater diffusion; If it be made to stand still it putrifies: and all this we do. For,

4. In all the procelle of our health we are running to our graves: we open our own sluices by viciousness, and unworthy actions; we pour in drink, and let out life; we encrease diseases and know not how to bear them; we strangle our selves with our own intemperance; we suffer the feavers and the inflammations of lust; and we quench our souls with drunkenness; we bury our understandings in loads of meat and surfeits: and then we lie down upon our beds, and roar with pain and disquietness of our souls: Nay, we kill one anothers souls and bodies with violence and folly, with the effects of pride and uncharitableness; we live and die like fools, and bring a *new mortality* upon our selves; wars and vexatious cares, and private duels, and publike disorders, and every thing that is unreasonable, and every thing that is violent: so that now we may adde this fourth gate to the grave: Besides *Nature* and *Chance*, and *the mistakes of art*, men die with their *own sins*, and then enter into the grave in haste and passion, and pull the heavy stone of the monument upon their own heads. And thus we make our selves like water spilt on the ground; we throw away our lives as if they were unprofitable, (and indeed most men make them so) we let our years slip through our fingers like water; and nothing is to be seen, but like a shower of tears upon a spot of ground; there is a grave digged, and a solemn mourning, and a great talk in the neighbourhood, and when the dayes are finished, they shall be, and they shall be remembered no more: And that's like water too, when it is spilt, *it cannot be gathered up again.*

There is no redemption from the grave.

— *inter se mortales mutua vivunt
Et quasi cursores vitæ lampada trahunt.*

Men live in their course and by turns: their light burns awhile, and then it burns blew and faint, and men go to converse with Spirits, and then they reach the taper to another; and as the hours of yesterday can never return again, so neither can the man whose hours they were, and who lived them over once, he shall never come to live them again, and live them better. When *Lazarus*, and the widows son of *Naim*, and *Tabitha*, and the Saints that appeared in Jerusalem at the resurrection of our blessed Lord, arose; they came into this world, some as strangers onely to make a visit, and all of them to manifest a glory: but none came upon the stock of a new life, or entred upon the stage as at first, or to perform the course of a new nature: and therefore it is observable, that we never read of any wicked person that was raised from the dead: *Dives* would fain have returned to his brothers house; but neither he, nor any from him could be sent: but all the rest in the New Testament (one onely excepted) were expressed to have been holy persons,

SERMON
XXVIII.

sons, or else by their age were declared innocent: *Lazarus* was beloved of Christ: those souls that appeared at the resurrection were the souls of Saints: *Tabitha* raised by Saint *Peter* was a charitable and a holy Christian: and the maiden of twelve years old, raised by our blessed Saviour, had not entred into the regions of choice and sinfulness: and the onely exception of the widdows son, is indeed none at all; for in it the Scripture is wholly silent; and therefore it is very probable that the same proceſſe was used; God in all other instances having chosen to exemplifie his miracles of nature to purposes of the Spirit, and in spiritual capacities. So that although the Lord of nature did break the bands of nature in some instances, to manifest his glory to succeeding, great and never failing purposes; yet (besides that this shall be no more) it was also instanced in such persons who were holy and innocent, and within the verge and comprehensions of eternall mercy. We never read that a wicked person felt such a miracle, or was raised from the grave to trie the second time for a Crown; but where he fell, there he fell down dead, and saw the light no more.

This consideration I intend to you as a severe Monitor, and an advice of carefulnesse, that you order your affairs so that you may be partakers of the first resurrection, that is, from sinne to grace, from the death of vitious habits, to the vigour, life and efficacy of an habitual righteousness: For (as it happened to those persons in the New Testament now mentioned, to them (I say) in the literall sence) *Blessed are they that have part in the first resurrection, upon them the second death shall have no power:* meaning that they who by the power of Christ and his holy Spirit were raised to life again, were holy and blessed souls, and such who were written in the book of God; and that this grace happened to no wicked and vitious person: so it is most true in the spirituall and intended sence: You onely that serve God in a holy life; you who are not dead in trespasses and sins; you who serve God with an early diligence and an unwearied industry, and a holy religion: you, and you onely shall come to life eternal, you onely shall be called from death to life, the rest of mankind shall never live again, but passe from death to death; from one death to another, to a worse: from the death of the body, to the eternal death of body and soul: and therefore in the Apostles Creed there is no mention made of the resurrection of wicked persons, but of *the resurrection of the body to everlasting life.* The wicked indeed shall be haled forth from their graves, from their everlasting prisons, where in chains of darknesse they are kept unto the judgement of the great day: But this therefore cannot be called *in sensu, favoris*, a resurrection, but the solemnities of the eternall death. It is nothing but a new capacity of dying again, such a dying as cannot signifie rest; but where death means nothing but an intolerable and never-ceasing calamity: and therefore these words

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of

A of my Text are otherwise to be understood of the wicked, otherwise of the godly: The wicked are spilt like water and shall never be gathered up again; no not in the gatherings of eternity; They shall be put into the vessels of wrath and set upon the flames of hell; but that is not a *gathering*, but a scattering from the face and presence of God. But the Godly also come under the sense of these words. They descend into their graves, and shall no more be reckoned among the living; they have no concernment in all that is done under the Sun. *Agamemnon* hath no more to do with the Turks armies invading and possessing that part of Greece where he reigned, then had the *Hippocentaur*, who never had a being: and *Cicero* hath no more interest in the present evils of Christendome, then we have to do with his boasted discovery of *Catilines* conspiracie. What is it to me that Rome was taken by the Gauls? and what is it now to *Camillus* if different religions be tolerated amongst us? These things that now happen concern the living, and they are made the scenes of our duty or danger respectively: and when our wives are dead and sleep in charnell houses, they are not troubled when we laugh loudly at the songs sung at the next marriage feast; nor do they envy when another snatches away the gleanings of their husbands passion.

C It is true they envie not, and they lie in a bosome where there can be no murmure, and they that are consigned to Kingdoms, and to the feast of the marriage-supper of the Lamb, the glorious and eternal Bride-groom of holy souls, they cannot think our marriages here, our lighter laughings, and vain rejoycings considerable as to them. And yet *there is a relation continued still*. *Aristotle* said, that to affirm the dead take no thought for the good of the living is a disparagement to the laws of that friendship which in their state of separation they cannot be tempted to rescind. And the Church hath taught in generall that they pray for us, they recommend to God the state of all their Relatives, in the union of the intercession that our blessed Lord makes for them and us: and *Saint Ambrose* gave some things in charge to his dying brother *Satyrus*, that he should do for him in the other world: he gave it him (I say) when he was dying, not when he was dead. And certain it is that though our dead friends affection to us is not to be estimated according to our low conceptions, yet it is not lesse, but much more then ever it was; it is greater in degree, and of another kind.

E But then we should do well also to remember, that in this world we are something besides flesh and blood; that we may not without violent necessities run into new relations, but preserve the affections we bear to our dead when they were alive: We must not so live as if they were perished, but so as pressing forward to the most intimate participation of the communion of Saints. And we also have some ways to expresse this relation, and to bear a part in this

SERMON
XXVIII.

2 Tim. 1. 18.

communion, by actions of intercourse with them, and yet proper to our state: such as are strictly performing the will of the dead, providing for, and tenderly and wisely educating their children, paying their debts, imitating their good example, preserving their memories privately, and publickly keeping their memorials, and desiring of God with hearty and constant prayer, that God would give them a joyfull resurrection, and a mercifull judgement, (for so S. Paul prayed in behalf of Onesiphorus) that God would shew them a mercy in that day, that fearfull, and yet much to be desired day, in which the most righteous person hath need of much mercy and pity, and shall finde it. Now these instances of duty shew that the relation remains still; and though the Relict of a man or woman hath liberty to contract new relations; yet I do not finde they have liberty to cast off the old; as if there were no such thing as immortality of souls. Remember that we shall converse together again: let us therefore never do any thing of reference to them which we shall be ashamed of in the day when all secrets shall be discovered, and that we shall meet again in the presence of God: In the mean time, God watcheth concerning all their interest, and he will in his time both discover and recompense. For though, as to us, they are like water-spilt, yet, to God, they are as water fallen into the sea, safe and united in his comprehension, and inclosures.

But we are not yet passed the consideration of the sentence: This descending to the grave is the lot of all men. [*neither doth God respect the person of any man*]. The rich is not protected for favour, nor the poor for pity, the old man is not revered for his age, nor the infant regarded for his tenderneſſe; youth and beauty, learning and prudence, wit and strength lie down equally in the dishonours of the grave. All men, and all natures, and all persons resist the addresſes and solemnities of death, and strive to preserve a miserable and an unpleaſant life; and yet they all sink down and die. For ſo have I ſeen the pillars of a building aſſiſted with artificiall props bending under the preſſure of a roof, and pertinaciouſly reſiſting the infallible and prepared ruine,

*Donec certa dies omni compage ſoluta
Ipſum cum rebus ſubruat auxilium,*

till the determined day comes, and then the burden ſunk upon the pillars, and diſordered the aids and auxiliary rafters into a common ruine and a ruder grave: ſo are the deſires and weak arts of man, with little aids and aſſiſtances of care and phyſick we ſtrive to ſupport our decaying bodies, and to put off the evil day; but quickly that day will come, and then neither Angels nor men can reſcue us from our grave; but the roof ſinks down upon the walls, and the walls deſcend to the foundation; and the beauty of the face, and the diſhonours of the belly, the diſcerning head and the ſervile feet,

A feet, the thinking heart, and the working hand, the eyes and the guts together shall be crush'd into the confusion of a heap, and dwell with creatures of an equivocall production, with worms and serpents, the sons and daughters of our own bones, in a house of dirt and darknesse.

Let not us think to be excepted or deferred. If beauty, or wit, or youth, or Noblenesse, or wealth, or vertue could have been a defence, and an excuse from the grave, we had not met here to day to mourn upon the herse of an excellent Lady; and God onely knows for which of us next the mourners shall go about the streets, or weep in houses.

B

Zeus ἔπει το γέ οἶδε, καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖς ἄλλοι
Οὐκ ἀπολύει θανάτῳ τελευτῶν παρήμενον ὄντιν.

II. γ.

We have lived so many yeers; and every day and every minuite we make an escape from those thousands of dangers and deaths that encompass us round about: and such escapings we must reckon to be an extraordinary fortune, and therefore that it cannot last long. Vain are the thoughts of Man, who when he is young or healthfull, thinks he hath a long threed of life to run over, and that it is violent and strange for young persons to die; and naturall and proper onely for the aged. It is as naturall for a man to die by drowning as by a fever: And what greater violence or more unnaturall thing is it, that the horse threw his Rider into the river, then that a drunken meeting cast him into a fever; and the strengths of youth are as soon broken by the strong sicknesses of youth, and the stronger intemperance, as the weaknesse of old age by a cough, or an asthma, or a continuall rheume: Nay, it is *more naturall* for young Men and Women to die, then for old; because that is *more naturall* which hath more naturall causes; and that is more naturall which is most common: but to die with age is an extreme rare thing; and there are more persons carried forth to buriall before the five and thirtieth yeer of their age then after it. And therefore let no vain confidence make you hope for long life. If you have lived but little, and are still in youth, remember that now you are in your biggest throng of dangers both of body and soul; and the proper sins of youth to which they rush infinitely and without consideration, are also the proper and immediate instruments of death. But if you be old you have escaped long and wonderfully, and the time of your escaping is out: you must not for ever think to live upon wonders, or that God will work miracles to satisfie your longing follies, and unreasonable desires of living longer to sin and to the world. Go home and think to die, and what you would choose to be doing when you die, that do daily; for you will all come to that passe, to rejoyce that you did so, or wish that you had: that will be the condition of every one of us; for *God regardeth no mans person*.

E

Well!

SERMON
XXVIII.

Well! but all this you will think is but a sad story. What? we must die, and go to darknesse and dishonour; and we must die quickly, and we must quit all our delights, and all our sins, or do worse, infinitely worse; and this is the condition of us all from which none can be excepted; every man shall be split and fall into the ground, and be gathered up no more. Is there no comfort after all this? shall we go from hence and be no more seen, and have no recompense,

*Miser, ô miser, aiunt, omnia admisit
Una dies infasta mihi tot premia vite.*

Shall we exchange our fair dwellings for a coffin, our softer beds for the moistned and weeping turf, and our pretty children for worms, and is there no allay to this huge calamity? Yes, there is, There is a [yet] in the Text: [For all this, yet doth God devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.] All this sorrow and trouble is but a phantasmie, and receives its account and degrees from our present conceptions and the proportion to our relishes and guilt.

When Pompey saw the Ghost of his first Lady Julia, who vexed his rest and his conscience for superindueing Cornelia upon her bed, within the ten moneths of mourning, he presently fancied it, either to be an illusion, or else that death could be no very great evil.

*Aut nihil est sensus animis in morte relictum,
Aut mors ipsa nihil —*

Either my dead wife knowes not of my unhand some marriage, and forgetfulnesse of her; or if she does, then the dead live.

*— longe, canit is si cognita, vita
Mors media est —*

Death is nothing but the middle point between two lives, between this and another: concerning which comfortable mystery the holy Scripture instructs our faith, and entertains our hope in these words. God is still the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for all delive to him: and the souls of Saints are with Christ: I desire to be dissolved (saith S. Paul) and to be with Christ, for that is much better: and, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works follow them: For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternall in the heavens: and this state of separation S. Paul calls, a being absent from the body, and being present with the Lord: This is one of Gods means which he hath devised, that although our Dead are like persons banished from this world, yet they are not expelled from God: They are in the hands of Christ; they are in his presence; they are, or shall be cloathed with a house of Gods making; they rest from all their labours; all tears are wiped from their eyes, and all discontents from their spirits; and

Vide 1 Cor.
15. 18.
1 Theff. 4. 16.
Revel. 14. 13.
John 5. 24.
2 Cor. 5. 8.
& 6.

A and in the state of separation before the soul be re-invested with her new house the spirits of all persons are with God, so secured and so blessed, and so sealed up for glory; that this state of interval and imperfection is in respect of its certain event and end infinitely more desirable than all the riches, and all the pleasures, and all the vanities, and all the Kingdoms of this world.

I will not venture to determine what are the circumstances of the abode of Holy Souls in their separate dwellings; and yet possibly that might be easier then to tell what or how the soul is and works in this world, where it is in the body *tanquam in aliena domo*, as in a prison, in fetters and restraints: for here the soul is discomposed and hindered, it is not as it shall be, as it ought to be, as it was intended to be; it is not permitted to its own freedom, and proper operation; so that all that we can understand of it here, is that it is so incommodated with a troubled and abated instrument, that the *object* we are to consider cannot be offered to us in a right line, in just and equal propositions, or if it could, yet because we are to understand the soul by the soul, it becomes not onely a troubled and *abused object*, but a *wreathed instrument*; and we here can consider it, just as a weak eye can behold a staffe thrust into the waters of a troubled river; the very water makes a refraction, and the storm doubles the refraction, and the water of the eye doubles the species, and there is nothing right in the thing, the object is out of its just place, and the medium is troubled, and the organ is impotent: *At cunctis exierit & in liberum cælum quasi in domum suam venerit*, when the soul is entered into her own house, into the free regions of the rest and the neighbourhood of heavenly joyes, then its operations are more spiritual, proper, and proportioned to its being; and though we cannot see at such a distance, yet the object is more fitted if we had a capable understanding; it is in it self in a more excellent and free condition.

Certain it is, that the body does hinder many actions of the soul: it is an imperfect body, and a diseased brain; or a violent passion that makes fools: no man hath a foolish soul: and the reasonings of men have infinite difference and degrees by reason of the bodies constitution. Among beasts which have no reason, there is a greater likeness then between men, who have: and as by faces it is easier to know a man from a man, then a sparrow from a sparrow, or a squirrel from a squirrel: so the difference is very great in our souls: which difference, because it is not originally in the soul (and indeed cannot be in simple and spiritual substances of the same species or kind) it must needs drive wholly from the body, from its accidents and circumstances: from whence it follows, that because the body casts fetters and restraints, hindrances and impediments upon the soul, that the soul is much freer in the state of separation.

SERMON
XXVIII.

1 Thes. 5. 10.

paration; and if it hath any act of life, it is much more noble and expedite.

That the soul is alive after our death, S. Paul affirms [*Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*] Now it were strange that we should be alive, and live with *Christ*, and yet do no act of life: the body when it is asleep does many: and if the soul does none, the principle is lesse active then the instrument; but if it does any act at all in separation, it must necessarily be an act or effect of understanding; there is nothing else it can do. But this it can. For it is but a weak and an unlearned proposition to say, That the soul can do nothing of it self, nothing without the phantasmes and provisions of the body. For

1. In this life the soul hath one principle clearly separate, abstracted and immaterial, I mean, *the Spirit of grace*, which is a principle of life and action, and in many instances does not at all communicate with matter, as in the infusion, superinduction and the creation of spiritual graces.
2. As nutrition, generation, eating and drinking are actions proper to the body and its state: so, extasies, visions, raptures, intuitive knowledge, and consideration of it self, acts of volition, and reflex acts of understanding are proper to the soul.
3. And therefore it is observable that S. Paul said that *he knew not whether his visions and raptures were in or out of the body*: for by that we see his judgement of the thing, that one was as likely as the other, neither of them impossible or unreasonable; and therefore that the soul is as capable of action alone as in conjunction.
4. If in the state of blessedness there are some actions of the soul which do not passe through the body, such as contemplation of God, and conversing with spirits, and receiving those influences and rare immissions which coming from the Holy and mysterious Trinity make up the crown of glory; it follows that the necessity of the bodies ministry is but during the state of this life, and as long as it converses with fire and water, and lives with corn and flesh, and is fed by the satisfaction of material appetites; which necessity and manner of conversation when it ceases, it can be no longer necessary for the soul to be served by phantasmes and material representations.
5. And therefore when the body shall be re-united, it shall be so ordered, that then the body shall consistle is gives not any thing, but receives all its being and operation, its manner and abode from the soul, and that then it comes not to serve a necessity, but to partake a glory. For as the operations of the soul in this life, begin in the body, and by it the object is transmitted to the soul: so then they shall begin in the soul and pass to the body; and as *the operations of the soul* by reason of its dependence on the body are *animal, natural and material*; so in the resurrection, *the body* shall be *spiritual* by reason of the preeminence, influence, and prime operation of the soul. Now between these

two

A two states, stands the state of separation, in which the operations of the soul are of a middle nature, that is, not so spirituall as in the resurrection; and not so animal and natural as in the state of conjunction.

To all which I adde this consideration: That our souls have the same condition that Christs soul had in the state of separation; because he took on him all our nature, and all our condition; and it is certain, Christs soul in the three dayes of his separation did exercise acts of life, of joy and triumph, and did not sleep, but visited the souls of the Fathers, trampled upon the pride of Devils, and satisfied those longing souls which were *Prisoners of hope*; and from all this we may conclude, that the souls of all the servants of Christ are alive, and therefore do the actions of life, and proper to their state; and therefore it is highly probable that the soul works clearer, and understands brighter, and discourses wiser, and rejoyces louder, and loves noblier, and desires purer, and hopes stronger then it can do here.

B But if these Arguments should fail, yet the felicity of Gods Saints cannot fail. For suppose, the body to be a necessary instrument but out of tune, and discomposed by sin and anger, by accident and chance, by defect and imperfections, yet, that it is better then none at all; and that if the soul works imperfectly with an imperfect body, that then she works not at all when she hath none; and suppose also that the soul should be as much without sense or perception in death, as it is in a deep sleep, which is the image and shadow of death; yet then God devises other means that his banished be not expelled from him. For,

C 2. God will restore the soul to the body, and raise the body to such a perfection, that it shall be an Organ fit to praise him upon; it shall be made spiritual to minister to the soul, when the soul is turned into a spirit. then the soul shall be brought forth by Angels from her incomparable and easie bed, from her rest in Christs Holy Bosome, and be made perfect in her being, and in all her operations; And this shall first appear by that perfection which the soul shall receive as instrumental to the last judgement: for then she shall see clearly all the Records of this world, all the Register of her own memory. For all that we did in this life, is laid up in our memories: and though dust and forgetfulnesse be drawn upon them, yet when God shall lift us from our dust, then shall appear clearly all that we have done, written in the Tables of our conscience, which is the souls memory. We see many times, and in many instances, D that a great memory is hindered and put out, and we thirty yeers after come to think of something that lay so long under a curtain; we think of it suddenly and without a line of deduction, or proper consequence: And all those famous memories, of *Simonides* and *Theocritus*, of *Hortensius* and *Seneca*, of *Sceptim Metrodorum* and *Carnedes*, E

SERMON
XXVIII.

neades, of *Cyneas* the Embassadour of *Pyrrhus*, are onely the Records better kept, and lesse disturbed by accident and disease. For even the memory of *Herods* son of *Athens*, of *Bathyllus* and the dullest person now alive is so great, and by God made so sure a record of all that ever he did, that as soon as ever God shall but tune our instrument, and draw the curtains, and but light up the candle of immortality, there wee shall finde it all, there we shall see all, and all the world shall see all; then wee shall be made fit to converse with God after the manner of spirits; we shall be like to Angels.

In the mean time; although upon the perswasion of the former discourse, it be highly probable that the souls of Gods servants do live in a state of present blessednesse; and in the exceeding joyes of a certain expectation of the revelation of the day of the Lord, and the coming of Jesus, yet it will concern us onely to secure our state by holy living, and leave the event to God; that (as *Saint Paul* said) whether present or absent, whether sleeping or waking, whether perceiving or perceiving not, wee may be accepted of him: that when wee are banished this world, and from the light of the Sunne, we may not be expelled from God, and from the light of his countenance, but that from our beds of sorrows, our souls may passe into the bosome of Christ, and from thence to his right hand in the day of sentence: For wee must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, and then if we have done well in the body, we shall never be expelled from the beatificall presence of God, but be domesticks of his family, and heirs of his Kingdom, and partakers of his glory.

Amen.

I Have now done with my Text, but yet am to make you another Sermon. I have told you the necessity and the state of death; it may be too largely for such a sad story; I shall therefore now with a better compendium teach you how to live, by telling you a plaine narrative of a life, which if you imitate and write after the copy, it will make, that death shall not bee an evil, but a thing to be desired, and to be reckoned amongst the purchases and advantages of your fortune. When *Martha* and *Mary* went to weep over the grave of their brother, Christ met them there and preached a Funeral Sermon, discoursing of the resurrection, and applying to the purposes of faith, and confession of Christ, and glorification of God: We have no other, we can have no better precedent to follow: And now that wee are come to weep over the grave of our Dear Sister, this rare personage, we cannot chuse but have many vertues to learn, many to imitate, and some to exercise.

I chose, not to declare her extraction and genealogy. It was indeed fair and Honourable; but having the blessing to be descended from worthy

A worthy and Honoured Ancestors, and her self to be adopted and ingrafted into a more Noble family, yet she felt such outward appendages to be none of hers, because not of her choice, but the purchase of the vertues of others, which although they did ingage her to do noble things, yet they would upbraid all degenerate and lesse honourable lives then were those which began and increased the honour of the families. She did not love her fortune for making her noble; but thought it would be a dishonour to her if shee did not continue her Noblenesse and excellency of vertue fit to be owned by persons relating to such Ancestors. It is fit for all us to honour the Noblenesse of a family: but it is also fit for them that are Noble to despise it, and to establish their honour upon the foundation of doing excellent things, and suffering in good causes, and despising dishonourable actions, and in communicating good things to others. For this is the rule in Nature: Those creatures are most Honourable which have the greatest power and do the greatest good: And accordingly my self have been a witness of it, how this excellent Lady would by an act of humility, and Christian abstraction strip her self of all that fair appendage of exteriour honour, which decked her person and her fortune; and desired to be owned by nothing but what was her own, that she might onely be esteemed Honourable according to that which is the honour of a Christian, and a wise person.

2. She had a strict and severe education, and it was one of Gods graces and favours to her. For being the Heireesse of a great fortune, and living amongst the throng of persons in the sight of vanities and empty temptations, that is, in that part of the Kingdom where greatness is too often expressed in great follies, and great vices, God had provided, a severe and angry education to chastise the forwardnesses of a young spirit, and a fair fortune; that she might for ever be so far distant from a vice, that she might onely see it and loath it, but never tast of it, so much as to be put to her choice whether she would be vertuous or no. God intending to secure this soul to himself, would not suffer the follies of the world to seize upon her by way of too neer a triall, or busie temptation.

3. She was married young; and besides her businesses of religion seemed to be ordained in the providence of God to bring to this Honourable family a part of a fair fortune, and to leave behinde her a fairer issue worth ten thousand times her portion: and as if this had been all the publike business of her life; when she had so farre served Gods ends, God in mercy would also serve hers, and take her to an early blessednesse.

4. In passing through which line of providence, she had the art to secure her eternall interest, by turning her condition into duty, and expressing her duty in the greatest eminency of a vertuous, prudent, and rare affection, that hath been known in any example. I will not

SERMON
XXVIII.

give her so low a testimony, as to say onely that she was chaste; She was a person of that severity, modesty, and close religion (as to that particular) that she was not capable of uncivil temptation; and you might as well have suspected the Sun to smell of the Poppy that hee looked on, as that she could have been a person apt to be sullied by the breath of a foul question.

5. But that which I shall note in her, is that which I would have exemplar to all Ladies, and to all women. She had a love so great for her Lord so intirely given up to a dear affection, that she thought the same things, and loved the same loves, and hated according to the same enmities, and breathed in his soul, and lived in his presence, and languished in his absence: and all that she was or did, was onely for and to her Dearest Lord,

Sigaudet, si flet, si tacet, hunc loquitur.

Cenat, propinat, poscit, negat, innuit, unus

Nebius est: --- and although this was a great enamel to the beauty of her soul, yet it might in some degrees be also a reward to the vertue of her Lord: For she would often discourse it to them that conversed with her; That he would improve that interest which he had in her affection to the advantages of God, and of religion: and she would delight to say, that he called her to her devotions, he encouraged her good inclinations, he directed her piety, he invited her with good books: and then she loved religion, which she saw was not onely pleasing to God, and an act or state of duty, but pleasing to her Lord, and an act also of affection and conjugal obedience; and what at first she loved the more forwardly for his sake, in the using of religion, left such reliſhes upon her spirit, that she found in it amability enough to make her love it for its own. So God usually brings us to him by instruments of nature and affections, and then incorporates us into his inheritance, by the more immediate reliſhes of Heaven, and the secret things of the Spirit. He onely was (under God) the light of her eyes, and the cordiall of her spirits, and the guide of her actions, and the measure of her affections, till her affections swelled up into a religion, and then it could go no higher, but was confederate with those other duties which made her dear to God. Which rare combination of duty and religion, I chuse to expresse in the words of Solomon: *She forsook not the guide of her youth, nor brake the Covenant of her God.*

Prov. 2.17.

6. As she was a rare wife: so she was an excellent Mother. For in so tender a constitution of spirit as hers was, and in so great a kindenesse towards her children, there hath seldom been seen a stricter and more curious care of their persons, their deportment, their nature, their disposition, their learning, and their customs: And if ever kindenesse and care did contest, and make parties in her, yet her care and her severity was ever victorious; and she knew

not

A not how to do an ill turn to their severer part, by her more tender and forward kindnesse. And as her custome was, she turned this also into love to her Lord. For she was not onely diligent to have them bred nobly and religiously, but also was carefull and solicitous that they should be taught to observe all the circumstances and inclinations, the desires and wishes of their Father; as thinking, that vertue to have no good circumstances which was not dressed by his copy, and ruled by his lines, and his affections: And her prudence in the managing her children was so singular and rare, that when ever you mean to blesse this family, and pray a hearty and a profitable prayer for it, beg of God, that the children may have those excellent things which she designed to them, and provided for them in her heart and wishes, that they may live by her purposes, and may grow thither, whither she would fain have brought them. All these were great parts of an excellent religion as they concerned her greatest temporal relations.

B 7. But if we examine how she demened her self towards God, there also you will finde her, not of a common, but of an exemplar piety. She was a great reader of Scripture, confining her self to great portions every day; which she read, not to the purposes of vanity, and impertinent curiosities, not to seem knowing, or to become talking, not to expound and Rule, but to teach her all her duty, to instruct her in the knowledge and love of God and of her Neighbours; to make her more humble, and to teach her to despise the world, and all its gilded vanities; and that she might entertain passions wholly in designe and order to heaven. I have seen a female religion that wholly dwelt upon the face and tongue; that like a wanton and undressed tree spends all its juice in suckers and irregular branches, in leaves and gumme, and after all such goodly outsides, you shall never eat an apple, or be delighted with the beauties, or the perfumes of a hopeful blossome. But the religion of this excellent Lady was of another constitution; It took root downward in humility, and brought forth fruit upward in the substantiall graces of a Christian, in charity and justice, in chastity and modesty, in fair friendships and sweetnesse of society. She had not very much of the forms and outsides of godlinesse; but she was hugely carefull for the power of it, for the morall, essentiall, and usefull parts; such which would make her be, not seem to be religious.

E 8. She was a very constant person at her prayers, and spent all her time which Nature did permit to her choice, in her devotions, and reading and meditating, and the necessary offices of household government, every one of which is an action of religion, some by nature, some by adoption. To these also God gave her a very great love to hear the word of God preached; in which, because I had some times the honour to minister to her, I can give this certain testimony,

SERMON
XXVIII.

timony, that she was a diligent, watchfull and attentive hearer : and to this had so excellent a judgement, that if ever I saw a woman whose judgement was to be revered, it was hers alone : and I have sometimes thought that the eminency of her discerning faculties did reward a pious discourse, and placed it in the regions of honour and usefulness, and gathered it up from the ground, where commonly such homilies are spilt, or scattered in neglect and inconsideration. But her appetite was not soon satisfied with what was usefull to her soul : she was also a constant Reader of Sermons, and seldome missed to read one every day ; and that she might be full of instruction and holy principles, she had lately designed to have a large Book, in which she purposed to have a stock of Religion transcrib'd in such assistances as she would chuse, that she might be readily furnished and instructed to every good work. But God prevented that, and hath filled her desires not out of cisterns and little aqueducts, but hath carried her to the fountain, where she drinks of the pleasures of the river, and is full of God.

9. She alwayes lived a life of much Innocence, free from the violences of great sins : her person, her breeding, her modesty, her honour, her religion, her early marriage, the Guide of her soul, and the Guide of her youth, were as so many fountains of restraining grace to her, to keep her from the dishonours of a crime. *Bonum est portare jugum ab adolescentiâ* : it is good to bear the yoke of the Lord from our youth ; and though she did so, being guarded by a mighty providence, and a great favour and grace of God from staining her fair soul with the spots of hell, yet she had strange fears and early cares upon her, but these were not onely for her self, but in order to others to her neereft Relatives. For she was so great a lover of this Honourable family of which now she was a Mother, that she desired to become a chanel of great blessings to it unto future ages, and was extremely jealous lest any thing should be done, or lest any thing had been done, though an age or two since, which should entail a curse upon the innocent posterity ; and therefore (although I do not know that ever she was tempted with an offer of the crime) yet she did infinitely remove all sacrilege from her thoughts, and delighted to see her estate of a clear and disintangled interest : she would have no mingled rights with it ; she would not receive any thing from the Church, but religion and a blessing : and she never thought a curse and a sin far enough off, but would desire it to be infinitely distant : and that as to this family God hath given much honour and a wise head to govern it, so he would also for ever give many more blessings : And because she knew that the sins of Parents descend upon Children, she endeavoured by justice and religion, by charity and honour to secure that her chanel should convey nothing but health, and a fair example and a blessing.

10. And though her accounts to God was made up of nothing but

A but small parcels, little passions, and angry words, and trifling discourses, which are the allayes of the piety of the most holy persons, yet she was early at her repentance; and toward the later end of her dayes, grew so fast in religion as if she had had a revelation of her approaching end; and therefore that she must go a great way in a litte time her discourses more full of religion, her prayers more frequent, her charity increasing, her forgiveness more forward, her friendships more communicative, her passions more under discipline, and so she trimm'd her lamp, not thinking her night was so neer, but that it might shine also in the day time, in the Temple, and before the Altar of incense.

B But in this course of hers there were some circumstances, and some appendages of substance, which were highly remarkable.

C 1. In all her Religion, and in all her actions of relation towards God, she had a strange evenness and untroubled passage, sliding toward her Ocean of God and of infinity with a certain and silent motion. So have I seen a river deep and smooth passing with a still foot and a sober face, and paying to the *Fiscus*, the great Exchequer of the Sea, the Prince of all the watery bodies, a tribute large and full: and hard by it a little brook skipping and making a noise upon its unequal and neighbour bottom; and after all its talking and bragged motion, it payed to its common Audit no more then the revenues of a little cloud, or a contemptible vessel: So have I sometimes compar'd the issues of her religion to the solemnities and fam'd outsidies of anothers piety. It dwelt upon her spirit, and was incorporated with the periodical work of every day: she did not beleeve that religion was intended to minister to fame and reputation, but to pardon of sins, to the pleasure of God, and the salvation of souls. For religion is like the breath of Heaven: if it goes abroad into the open air, it scatters and dissolves like camphyre: but if it enters into a secret hollownesse, into a close conveyance, it is strong and mighty, and comes forth with vigour and great effect at the other end, at the other side of this life, in the dayes of death and judgement.

D 2. The other appendage of her religion, which also was a great ornament to all the parts of her life, was a rare modesty and humility of spirit, a confident despising and undervaluing of her self. For though she had the greatest judgement, and the greatest experience of things and persons that I ever yet knew in a person of her youth, and sex, and circumstances; yet as if she knew nothing of it, she had the meanest opinion of her self; and like a fair taper when she shined to all the room, yet round about her own station she had cast a shadow and a cloud, and she shined to every body but her self. But the perfectnesse of her prudence and excellent parts could not be hid; and all her humility, and arts of concealment, made the vertues more amiable and illustrious. For as pride

SERMON
XXVIII.

fullies the beauty of the fairest vertues, and makes our understanding but like the craft and learning of the Devil: so humility is the greatest eminency, and art of publication in the whole world; and she in all her arts of secrecy and hiding her worthy things, was but like one that hideth the winde, and covers the oymment of her right hand.

I know not by what instrument it hapned; but when death drew neer, before it made any shew upon her body, or revealed it self by a naturall signification, it was conveyed to her spirit: she had a strange secret perswasion that the bringing this Childe should be her last scene of life; and we have known, that the soul, when she is about to disrobe her self of her upper garment, sometimes speaks rarely, *Magnifica verba mors propè ad mortem excitat*; sometimes it is propheticall; sometimes God by a superinduced perswasion wrought by instruments, or accidents of his own, serves the ends of his own providence and the salvation of the soul: But so it was, that the thought of death dwelt long with her, and grew from the first steps of fancy and fear, to a consent, from thence to a strange credulity, and expectation of it; and without the violence of sicknesse she died, as if she had done it voluntarily, and by designe, and for fear her expectation should have been deceived, or that she should seem to have had an unreasonable fear, or apprehension; or rather (as one said of *Cato*) *sic abiit à vitâ, ut causam moriendi natam se esse gauderet*, she died, as if she had been glad of the opportunity.

And in this I cannot but adore the providence, and admire the wisdom and infinite mercies of God. For having a tender and soft, a delicate and fine constitution and breeding, she was tender to pain, and apprehensive of it, as a childs shoulder is of a load and burden: *Grave est tenera cervici jugum*; and in her often discourses of death, which she would renew willingly and frequently, she would tell, that she feared not death, but she feared the sharp pains of death: *Emori nolo, me esse mortuam non curo*: The being dead, and being freed from the troubles and dangers of this world, she hoped would be for her advantage; and therefore that was no part of her fear: But she beleeving the pangs of death were great, and the use and aids of reason little, had reason to fear lest they should do violence to her spirit and the decency of her resolution. But God that knew her fears, and her jealousie concerning her self, fitted her with a death so easie, so harmlesse, so painlesse, that it did not put her patience to a severe trial. It was not (in all appearance) of so much trouble, as two fits of a common ague; so careful was God to remonstrate to all that stood in that sad attendance, that this soul was dear to him: and that since she had done so much of her duty towards it, he that began would also finish her redemption, by an act of a rare providence, and a singular mercy. *Blessed be that goodnesse of God, who does so carefull actions of mercy for*

A for the ease and security of his servants. But this one instance was a great demonstration, that the apprehension of death is worse then the pains of death: and that God loves to reprove the unreasonablenesse of our fears, by the mightinesse, and by the arts of his mercy.

B She had in her sicknesse (if I may so call it, or rather in the solemnities, and graver preparations towards death) some curious and well-becoming fears, concerning the finall estate of her soul. But from thence she passed into a *deliquium*, or a kinde of trance, and as soon as she came forth of it, as if it had been a vision, or that she had conversed with an Angel, and from his hand had received a labell, or scroll of the *book of life*, and there seen her *name* enrolled, she cried out aloud, [*Glorie be to God on high: Now I am sure I shall be saved.*] Concerning which manner of discoursing we are wholly ignorant, what judgement can be made: but certainly there are strange things in the other world, and so there are in all the immediate preparation to it; and a little glimpse of heaven, a minutes conversing with an Angel, any ray of God, any communication, extraordinary from the spirit of comfort which God gives to his servants in strange and unknown manners, are infinitely far from illusions; and they shall then be understood by us, when we feel them, and when our new and strange needs shall be refreshed by such unusual visitations.

C But I must be forced to use summaries and arts of abbreviature in the enumerating those things in which this rare Personage was dear to God, and to all her Relatives.

D If we consider her Person, she was in the flower of her age, *Ju-cundum cum etas florida ver ageret*; of a temperate, plain and naturall diet, without curiosity or an intemperate palate; she spent lesse time in dressing, then many servants; her recreations were little and seldom, her prayers often, her reading much: shee was of a most noble and charitable soul; a great lover of honourable actions, and as great a despiser of base things; hugely loving to oblige others, and very unwilling to bee in arreare to any upon the stock of courtesies and liberality; so free in all acts of favour, that shee would not stay to hear her self thanked, as being unwilling that what good went from her to a needfull, or an obliged person should ever return to her again; shee was an excellent friend, and hugely dear to very many, especially to the best and most discerning persons, to all that conversed with her, and could understand her great worth and sweetnesse: She was of an Honourable, a nice and tender reputation; and of the pleasures of this world which were laid before her in heaps, she took a very small and inconsiderable share, as not loving to glut her self with vanity, or to take her portion of good things here below.

E If we look on her as a Wife, she was chaste and loving, fruitfull and discreet, humble and pleasant, witty and compliant, rich and fair, and wanted nothing to the making her a principal and a precedent to the best

best Wives of the World, but a long life, and a full age.

If we remember her as a Mother, she was kinde and severe, carefull and prudent, very tender, and not at all fond, a greater lover of her childrens souls then of their bodies, and one that would value them more by the strict rules of honour and proper worth, then by their relation to her self.

Her servants found her prudent, and fit to Govern, and yet open-handed and apt to reward: a just Exactor of their duty, and a great Rewarder of their diligence.

She was in her house a comfort to her dearest Lord, a guide to her children, a rule to her servants, an example to all.

But as shee related to God in the offices of Religion, shee was even and constant, silent and devout, prudent and material: shee loved what she now enjoyes, and she feared what she never felt, and God did for her what she never did expect. Her fears went beyond all her evil; and yet the good which she hath received was, and is, and ever shall be beyond all her hopes.

She lived as we all should live, and she died as I fain would die —

Et cum supremos Læthesi perneverit annos,

Non aliter cineres mando jacere meas.

I pray God I may feel those mercies on my death-bed that she felt, and that I may feel the same effect of my repentance which she feels of the many degrees of her innocence. Such was her death that she did not die too soon; and her life was so usefull and so excellent, that she could not have lived too long: *Nemo parum diu vixit qui virtutis perfectæ perfectus functus est munere:* and as now in the grave it shall not be enquired concerning her, how long she lived, but how well? so to us who live after her, to suffer a longer calamity, it may be some ease to our sorrows, and some guide to our lives, and some security to our conditions, to consider that God hath brought the piety of a young Lady to the early rewards of a never ceasing, and never dying eternity of glory. And wee also if we live as she did, shall partake of the same glories; not onely having the honour of a good name, and a dear and honoured memory, but the glories of these glories, the end of all excellent labours, and all prudent counsels, and all holy religion, even the salvation of our souls in that day, when all the Saints, and amongst them this excellent Woman shall be shown to all the world to have done more, and more excellent things then we know of or can describe. *Mors illos consecrat, quorum exitum & qui timent, laudant:* Death consecrates and makes sacred that person whose excellency was such, that they that are not displeased at the death, cannot dispraise the life; but they that mourn sadly, think they can never commend sufficiently.

The End.

A brief Table to both the Volumes of Sermons.

A
Who shall be the *Accusers* of sinners, that belong not to life in the great judgment, Vol. 1. p. 13.

Alms: wherein and how far our respects to the duties of justice may withhold our hands from giving alms, 1. 183.

Of the *Angel Guardian*, 1. 263. C

Athanasius being overtaken by his persecutors in his flight from them, how he concealed himself, 2. 260.

Atheism; the folly of it, 1. 262. B

B
Bishop: whether the calling of a King or a Bishop is to be preferred, 1. 174.

C
Celibate: a comparison between it and marriage, 1. 123.

Certainty of salvation: how to confute such vain confidences, 1. 87.

Comfort: we must in our discourse comfort our brethren where there is cause, 1. 327.

Complying: of complying with superiors in their sins, by imitation of them, 2. 206. B

Conscience: the torments of an unquiet conscience described and considered, 1. 20.

Confession: of revealing secrets delivered under the seal of Confession, 1. 306. D

Covetousness in Scripture hath other names besides its own, 1. 302. A

Cursing, 1. 317.

Custom: its ill effects upon man, 1. 267.

D
Dreams: the vanity of them, 1. 121.

Deceit: various sorts of men, that do the work of the Lord deceitfully, 1. 155. & seq.

Despise: who despise the mercies of God, 2. 167. D. their condition dangerous, 1. 168.

Detraction, 1. 313. E

Doctrines; how we are to try them, 2. 285. & 275.

E
Eccles. 12. 5. explicated, 1. 115.

Ephes. 1. 4. 5. explicated, 2. 301.

Eusebius: what S. Paul meant by it, 1. 301. D

Evil nature; how one may cure it in himself, 1. 147.

F
Faith: divers sorts of insufficient faith, 1. 169.

Fasting, 1. 188.

Fear: its several acceptions, 1. 86: the properties of a religious fear, 1. 88.

& seq. of fear in times of persecution, 1. 102.

Flattery, 1. 318.

several ways of it, 1. 320.

Flesh: the weakness of flesh, and its natural powers, 1. 128.

Fortune: disadvantages of a great fortune, 1. 179.

G
God: a scheme of what he hath done for us in order to our salvation, 1. 242.

the manner of jealousy in God, 2. 29. B. that it is not unjust in God to punish one for the sin of another, 2. 35. D.

his ends in doing it, 2. 36. B. in what instances he punishes one person for the sin of another, 1. 37. D.

how God can be glorified by us, 2. 53. the goodness of God towards us, 2. 148. & 149.

how great impiety to despise such goodness, 2. 150. E. his long suffering towards us, 2. 153. & 152.

him not punishing sinners, 1. 152.

some

sometimes no mercy, 2. 163
Gospel: the mysterious articles thereof, 2. 2. that they could be revealed by none but the Spirit, *ib.* nor can be revealed but by the help of the Spirit, 2. 3. why the Gospel is called Spirit, 2. 4. the Gospel a covenant of sufferings, 2. 107. C. & 108. & seq.
Grace: what is the state of grace 2. 155 he is not in the state of grace, who retains affections to any one sin, 2. 155. degrees of encreasing grace, 2. 178. how to discern our growth in grace, 2. 180. & seq. the manner of its growth, 2. 192. E. a caution to be taken with the rules of discerning our growth in grace, 2. 194 signs of growth in grace given by some, 2. 195

H.

Heart: reasons why God chooseth to be served by it principally, 1. 155 weakness of the heart in relation to good actions, 2. 83. its strength in lusts and sinful passions, 2. 84. its deceitfulness, 2. 102. & vol. 2. ser. 7. per tot. it is deceitful in its purposes and resolutions, 2. 87. in its designs 2. 89. our hearts are blind, 2. 92. by what means the heart of man procures its own ignorance, 2. 94. the hardness of the heart, 2. 98. the heart is proud, *ib.* it is deeply in love with wickedness, 2. 99. how we are to treat our hearts, 2. 102. D

Hell: the opinion of some of the primitive Fathers concerning the eternity of the pains of hell, 1. 39

Husband, the rules of his love to his Wife, 1. 234. & seq.

I.

Idle words, how far forbidden or lawful, 1. 292

Jesting, 1. 301. & seq. against profane jesting, 1. 305

Jealousie: the circumstances of it in God, 2. 29. B

Impunity, not always an argument

of mercy, 2. 163

Ignorance, an effect of sin, 1. 26

Instruction: that we ought to teach and instruct others, 1. 325

Intemperance in eating and drinking, an enemy to health, 1. 198. destructive of wisdom, 1. 107. the measures of temperance in eating and drinking, 1. 109

Intercession in prayer, vol. 1. ser. 6. per tot.

Joy: what the joy of the ungodly is, 1. 145.

1 John 3 9. explained, 2. 9.

Judgement: the necessity of a day of universal Judgement, 1, 2. signs of the day of Judgement, which the Jews give, 1. 11. to be unmoved at the judgements of God on others, how dangerous a folly, 2. 168. E

K.

King: whether the calling of a King or Bishop is to be preferred in our choice, 1. 174.

L.

Life: the necessity of holy life, 2. 72
Luke 11. 47. explicated, 2. 43 A

Lukewarmness: in what sense God hates it, 1. 165. the reasons why, 1. 166

M.

Maxims, 2. 159

Man: God hath provided better for the natural appetites of man than other earthly creatures, 1. 193. the vanity of mans life & strength, 2. 81

Matth. 12. 36. explicated, 1. 291

Marriage: a comparison between it and celibate, 1. 223. rules for deportment of married persons, 1. 225 & seq.

Minister: of the efficacy of prayer made by an evil Minister, 1. 79

Miracles: of the probation of Religion by them, 1. 146

Mirth, 1. 304

Pardon

P.

Pardon of sin, the signs of it, 1.99 not obtained without difficulty, 1.97
Pleasures of the world no proper instruments of felicity, 1.193. pleasures of sin considered, 1.247. found to be troublesome in their acquisition, 1.250. the Spirit of God is given as a preservative against it.
Perseverance, 1.176.
Persecution: the benefit and usefulness of persecution and suffering, 1.120.121. rules for the practice of them, that are under persecution, 2.133. & seq.
Poverty, its benefits, 2.129.E
Popes of Rome, a character of them given by one, 2.173.D
Prayer: of frequency in it, 179. a caution concerning frequency of prayer, 1.181.E. why the prayers of good men often prevail not, 1.59
Prosperity, no argument of a just cause, 2.125. E. we must not expect it in this life, 2.116. prosperity of the wicked what it is, how vain, 2.127

R.

Recidivation, 1.109. & seq.
Railing and reviling, 1.313
Religion, how far it is to be preferred before secular business, 1.173. how far delight in works of Religion is required, 1.177. against compulsive courses in the propagating of Religion, 1.185
Repentance, broken into fragments is to be suspected, 1.92. how it glorifies God, 2.54. A. what it is in its essence and necessary properties, 2.55. & seq. & 66. sorrow alone is not repentance, 2.57. there must be a dereliction of sin, 2.58. B. a death-bed repentance insufficient, 2.63.64. & ser. 5. per tot. & 2.68. E. there is a kind of repentance that is consistent with the greatest affection to sin, 2.69. B. it ought not to be delayed, 2.70. B. of them that are bold in sin, upon a resolution

to repent 2.70. of what use it is to make that question, Whether God can save a dying man that then begins to repent, 2.74. C. when is the latest time of beginning repentance, 2.75. how this doctrine is to be separated from despair, 2.77. how contradicted by the mercies of Christ, 2.78. A. the thief upon the Cross no objection against this, 2.78
Reproof: it is a duty, 1.328. the rules of managing it, 1.330. of bearing reproof, 2.183.
Resolving to live a good life, what efficacy it hath (as a part of repentance) without performance, 2.60
Restitution: of that restitution which those sons are to make, who are made rich by the rapine and oppression of their Ancestors, 2.44

S

Secrets 167. & seq., what it is, 1.289.D
Secrets; of revealing them, 1.305
Sins: how far faith and charity prevail to the blotting out of sins, 1.160
Sin; its pleasures considered, 1.247. found to be troublesome in their acquisition, 1.250. its folly, 1.263. it makes a man morally weak, 1.265. the custom of it prevails against the interest of man, 1.268.A. and against his experience, *ib.* C. it introduces baseness upon the spirit, 1.270. many sins directly shameful in their nature, 1.273. the shame that follows sin, 1.275. & seq. sin cannot be concealed, 1.276. C. God punishes sin with sin, 1.278. the horrid punishments of sin, 1.280. & seq. the punishments of some sins is foreseen and usual, 1.282.D. whether we sin in every action, 2.210. E. of sins of infirmity, 2.22. & seq. we do not sufficiently beware of sin, 2.28. how the guilt and punishment of it is propagated, 2.31. D. upon whom the punishment of sin descends by propagation, 2.34. why this guilt and punishment of sin is

thus propagated, 2.35. E. that it is not unjust in God to do so, *ib.* D. Gods ends in doing it, 1.36. B. in what cases one person is punished for the sin of another, 2.37. D. what remedies there are against the danger of such punishments, 2.40. to be used by such sons, &c. as are partners in the guilt, *Ib.* & *seq.* by such as are innocent, 2.46. C.

Silence: the praise of it, 1.296. & 1.311. C. its moderation, 1.296. E

Sinners: how God treats them, 2.197. the orders of lesser sinners explicated, who are to be treated gently by men, 2.199. rules and helps for the use of them, that are good men generally, but interrupt their state by some failings, 2.214. & *seq.* how the hopes of their pardon stands that are gross sinners, 2.220

Slander, 1.311. & 315

What is the *Sign* of the Son of man, mentioned *Mat* 24.30. 1.10

Soul: how great a charity to save the soul of a Brother, 1.184

Spirit: what it is to grieve him, 1.210 what it is to be in the Spirit, 2.5. all that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ, 2.6. how the Spirit is given in the Gospel, 2.7. B. it is given as a remedy against worldly pleasure, 2.8. as a remedy against sorrow, 2.10. as an antidote against evil concupiscences, 2.12. the measure of the Spirit in Christians compared with those measures which the Jews had, 2.13. the effects of the Spirit in a Christian 2.14.15. He helps our infirmities in prayer, 2.15. of praying in the Spirit, 2.15. E. the spiritual man, and natural man compared, 2.23

Speaking: of much speaking, 1.290 examples of men that abstained from speaking a long time, 1.294. E. S. *Gregory Naz.* abstained from speaking one whole Lent, 1.295. B. S. *Paul* the Hermit was so ashamed of a foolish question, that he spake not for three years after, 1.295. C.

Cicero affirmed, that he never spake that of which he repented, 1.297. C censured for it by S. *Augustine*, *Ibid.* Remedies against such speaking considered and prescribed, 1.298. Sculiloquy, 1.300. Scurriosity, 1.301. & *seq.* contentious speaking, 1.309. the Duties of the Tongue in speaking, 1.325

Sufferings: Gods method in bringing them into the world, 2.105. the Gospel a covenant of sufferings; 2.107. C. reasons of Gods providence for the sufferings of his children, 2.120. C. & 130. C. the advantages of them, 2.138. D. the end of them, 2.144

State of Separation, 2.367

Superstition, 1.114. & *seq.* per tot.

Success, no argument of a just cause, 2.125. E. & 1.155.

Sword, not a competent instrument to propagate Religion by it, 1.186

Swearing, 1.307. common swearing maketh perjury common, 1.308

T

Temperance: the measures of temperance in eating and drinking, 1.209

Teachers: of false teachers, 2.94. D. how to discern them from good, 2.274

U.

Vertue is to be loved; for it self, not for the consequent reward, 2.187

Understanding: how it was impaired in the fall of man; not by a change of its essential faculties, but by impeding them, 1.261. D.

W.

Wife: the rules of her obedience to the husband, 1.240. & *seq.* of her compliance with him, 1.242

Z.

Zeal: its rules, 1.173. and excesses, 1.185

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